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Journal of the Asiatic
Society of Bengal

JOURNAL
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ASIATIC SOCIETY
OF
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VOL. XII.
PART II.—JULY TO DECEMBER, 1843.
NEW SERIES.

"It will flourish, if naturalists, chemists, antiquaries, philologers, and men of science, in different parts of *Asia* will commit their observations to writing, and send them to the Asiatic Society, in Calcutta; it will languish, if such communications shall be long intermitted; and will die away if they shall entirely cease."—SIR WM. JONES.

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JOURNAL

OF THE

ASIATIC SOCIETY.

Report on the Manners, Customs and Superstitions of the people of Shoa, and on the History of the Abyssinian Church. By Captain GRAHAM, B. A. from the Sec. etariat of the Government of India.

From Captain W. C. HARRIS, Engineers, late on a Mission to the Court of Shoa, to J. P. WILLOUGHBY, Esq., Secretary to Government of Bombay, dated 8th May, 1843.

SIR,—I have the honor to forward the accompanying able reports by Captain Graham, on the Manners, Customs and Superstitions of the people of Shoa, and on the History of the Abyssinian Church.

2d. These reports complete the information which was required by the instructions that I had the honor to receive from you.

I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) W. C. HARRIS,

*Capt. Engrs. late on a Mission to the Court of Shoa.
Bombay, 8th May, 1843.*

Report on the Manners, Customs and Superstitions of Shoa.

The last known tale of a plausible adventurer in this country has been wrought up with the most meretricious tinsel to serve a specious design on this country of the Christian savage, but all works, both ancient and modern, have succeeded in casting a film over the eyes of the deluded public, which honesty loudly calls out to withdraw. The king of

of Shoa indeed forms an exception to most of the sweeping vices which disgrace the land, and his master of the horse has imitated his laudable example ; both have been blessed with natural endowments, which in a more favored country, would have thriven to maturity, but sad though the truth may be, after months' wearisome endurance and patient research, there is to be found no third individual to add to the limited number of the praiseworthy.

2d. The nation is priest-ridden and bigotted to a degree. The most ridiculous doctrines must be believed, and the most severe fasts and penances must be endured, according to the pleasure and fiat of the church. Twelve thousand clerical drones, "*Fruges consumere nati*," fatten in idleness on the labour of the working classes, and even the sites of their habitations tend to rivet the chain of bondage, which encircles the neck of the infatuated Abyssinian. On the very summits of the ranges, stand the churches and the monasteries high over the vales, and perched among the few remaining groves, dotting the cool shady peaks, and far elevated in their pride of place, above the residence of the common herd. The priestly intimation is received with more attention, issuing from a temple, shrouded from human ken in the thick heavy fog, and the thunder of excommunication is listened to with utter abasement and prostration of spirit, proceeding from the grand scene of elementary strife, and falling upon the ear of the awe-stricken serf, amidst the prolonged echoes of the confirming thunder of heaven.

3rd. The king however, has lately taken upon himself to proclaim by the voice of the herald, and the beat of the drum, those doctrines which *he* conceives to be most conducive to salvation, and by the summary deposition of the refractory spiritual chiefs, and confiscation of their property, he bids fair in time to promulgate a most curious religious code of his own, if not upset by a civil war, which may blaze out in consequence of his innovations.

4th. The land swarms with monks and anchorites, who are clothed in yellow dresses, or in the prepared skins of the antelope, and who, from the licentiousness of their manners, roam through the country a perfect pest and plague to society. Men become monks at any period of life. The rich deliver over their property to their children, who are bound to support them until their death. The poor live upon the

bounty of the community, and many never enter the huts of the monastery, but with their wives reside at ease in their own homes, having joined the order for the mere sake of defrauding their creditors; for however deeply involved, the donning of the head dress, and the monastic habit clears off all former scores, with the ease and rapidity of the most indulgent court of insolvency.

5th. The skin of the (algeazine ?) is adopted as a dress by all who cover under the garb of humiliation a deep-rooted pride of their institution, and together with the unwashed person is meant to commemorate the legend of their great founder, Istathios, who boasted of no ablution during a long term of existence, and who miraculously crossed the river Jordan, floating secure upon his greasy skin. The prophet Samuel is also sometimes referred to, as affording another example of the advantages of the covering of hide, and the story relates, how he sailed in company with his disciples for seven days' journey on the surface of a great sea, borne in safety upon the leathern robes which formed the only mortal attire in those ancient days.

6th. Although monasteries are rife over the face of the country, yet the mountain Azzulo, situated near the river Hawash, is celebrated as the most sacred seat of monkery. The mountain continually emits dark smoke, and its only inhabitants are Christian fathers, who despising the world and its vanities retire thither, unmolested by Galla or Mahommedan, to spend their days in blissful peace and retirement, universally looked upon and feared as sorcerers; they are said to live on the most social terms with the lions and wild goats which abound upon the hill. The reception of youth as novices is by no means sanctioned by the monopolizing elders, to whom the tale assigns an exclusive subsistence upon the fruits and herbs and roots, which together with a pair of wings, are freely furnished them from heaven; but none of those who have as yet returned from the pilgrimage are stated to have brought back their feathered appendages, and the lank figure and dim eye betoken rather the toil of the weary wayfarer than the high enjoyment of Elysian feasts.

7th. The small encircling cord of silk round the neck, called the "Matab," is the emblem of the debased Christianity which exists throughout the land, the color is deep blue in reference to the smiling sky of heaven, and the turban of the priest and the monk is designed

to commemorate the event of Moses covering his face on the mountain of fire, when receiving the tablets of the law.

8th. Uncharitable and uncompromising, the dread anger of the Church often blazes forth into the furious blast of excommunication, and the souls of men are consigned to perdition for the most trifling offence.

9th. The bell, book and candle, can be hired by any disappointed enemy, and the hooded priest can be purchased to perform the ceremony, but the question in some cases is not without difficulty and danger to the officiating clergy, especially when sacred majesty is concerned, or where the sturdy sons of Europe come under the ban of the Shoa Church. The cells of the state prison often enclose the fanatic priest, whose want only interferes with the royal salvation; indifferent fare and close confinement ensure an absolution, and the martyr to religious intolerance is expelled from the country.

10th. The *argumentum baculinum* is the only other antidote, and possesses a wonderful effect in stilling the storm, when persuasively applied to the shoulders of arrogant Church pride.

11th. On the latest occasion of the ceremony being performed upon the fair sons of the North, the priest was quietly laid hold of, and introduced into the interior of the domicile, where his countenance considerably drooped at the sight of an unwelcome host just arrived with a most formidable cudgel. "My father must have been mistaken," was the opening address which saluted his astounded ear, whilst the cudgel descended upon his shoulders with an equally startling salutation. "My father never could have purposed the excommunication of his dear friend," followed the exordium, and the cudgel again pattered upon the priestly back; a most able running commentary was sustained for nearly five minutes, attended by many playful taps upon the head to quicken the clerical understanding, and on the termination of the conclusive argument, the priest willingly withdrew his ban, bestowed his entire absolution and sneaked away to his cell, mentally resolving never again to interfere with those most incomprehensible Europeans, who displayed so little terror at being cursed by the Church, and who entertained no respect whatever for the sacred persons of her ministers.

12th. The Negus, however, is the true God of their adoration, and the essence of this devotion pervades the band to its very core. The best

portions of the country pertain to His Majesty ; the lives and property of the subjects are entirely at his disposal ; every act is performed with some view to forward his pleasure ; and all wait on his sovereign for favor, preferment and place. Mild, however, and just in his disposition, he is universally beloved in his own dominions in which the oath is by the life of the king in the land, wise and warlike in his expeditions, he is feared and respected among all the adjacent tribes ; conducting himself with that easy freedom which generally distinguishes conscious superiority, his demeanour is kingly and commanding, and his character for impartial justice has obtained for him far and wide, the enviable cognomen of " the fine balance of gold."

13th. Here the precious metals form the exclusive privilege of royalty. Personal ornaments and colored raiment are prohibited to the subject by the severest sumptuary laws, and few, except the highest chiefs and warriors of the land, are ever honored by an exemption from the rule. All the appointments in the country are at the king's disposal. All rewards and favors come from the royal hand in years of famine. Food itself is only to be obtained from the royal store houses, and it is therefore by no means surprising, that the population should be mean, cringing and servile ; that they should in their aspirations after honor and place, submit every action of their life to the despot's will, and in their present benighted social condition, even bring their wives and daughters to pander to the despot's pleasures.

14th. But Sabela Selassee is an unique specimen of absolute power, and the iron sceptre falls light from his merciful hand even on the head of the offender. His virtues are many and conspicuous ; his faults entail harm chiefly upon himself ; and the expenditure of the greatest part of his hours might be held up as a worthy pattern for imitation for all.

15th. After religiously performing his devotions early in the morning, he inspects his stables and workshops, bestows charity on the assembled poor, despatches couriers, and gives private audiences of import, and afterwards reclining upon his throne in state, he listens for hours to all the appeals from his subjects.

Here access is easy. The king listens to all foreigners and subjects, men or women, rich or poor ; every one has a right to appear before him, and boldly to explain the nature of his case, and although established

custom obliges the subject to prostrate himself, and pays rather adoration than respect, yet every complainant may tell his story without the least hesitation or timidity. Judgment is always prompt, and generally correct. At three o'clock His Majesty proceeds to dine alone, and after the royal appetite is appeased, the doors are thrown open, and the long table in the great eating hall is crowded with the most distinguished warriors and guests; harpers and fiddlers perform during the entertainment, and singers lift up their voices in praise of his magnificence and liberality; but the king during all this scene of confusion and turmoil, still continues to peruse letters and issue instructions until the table has been three times replenished, and until all of a certain rank have freely partaken of his hospitality. At 5 o'clock, he retires with a few of his choice friends to the private apartments. Prayers and potent liquors pass away the evening hours, and the company depart, leaving only the favorite page to convey to the inmates of the Harem, the royal commands.

Midnight calls his Majesty from his couch to the perusal of psalms and holy writings; a band of sturdy priests in his immediate vicinity during the live-long night continually chaunt a noisy chorus of hymns, to preserve their master from the influence of evil spirits and bad dreams, and daylight brings a repetition of the busy exercise on horseback, when business or the fickle sky will permit.

17. The nation displays a strange medley of good and evil, mildness and cruelty. Superstition, religion and fanaticism in venerating the sovereign, and dealing out largess to the poor. They are drunkards and liars of the first magnitude, and their minds being insensible to the charms of exalted virtue, they are restrained from evil deeds by no moral influence whatever. Kind to their animals, slaves and females, they practice every species of barbarity upon their enemies, and are perfect fanatics in their religious creeds which are of the most subtle nature. They are fiercely arrayed against each other in hostile sects, and are only prevented from carrying on war to the knife, by the local difficulties which separate the parties. Easily irritated, their anger blazes up into a fierce flame of passion, but like the crackling thorns, it is soon expended; dull in comprehending a joke, they delight in the broad antics of the court buffoon; and violent and litigious in their private dealings, they are still not disposed to carry their wrath to extremity, or to allow amongst

each other the brutal feelings to exercise an entire predominance, restrained by the wholesome law of blood for blood, and life for life.

18. The principal men of the country who are not entrusted with government, spend their time in utter idleness, lounging about the purlieus of the court, or gambling for hours at the game of *gibbeta*, leaving the management of their houses to their women, and the direction of their farms to their servants and slaves. All, however, end their day at 4 o'clock, when the king's table is thrown open to men of rank, and when the king's potent hydromel very soon incapacitates them for any further thought or deed. The most slovenly appearance marks the interior of their houses, and dirt and filth choke up the surrounding enclosure. The furniture is confined to a rickety bedstead, a bullock hide, and a small wicker table; the necessary wood fire in the centre of the solitary apartment blackens every article within the walls with a thick crust of smoke, presenting a most gloomy vista on entering the doorway, and the universal objection to the use of water, either as regards their person or clothes, renders the foul tableau still more disgusting.

19. Water as well as coffee and tobacco are studiously avoided, as savouring too strongly of Islamism, and the Christian inhabitant contents himself with rubbing his eyes in the morning with the dry corner of his dirty robe, and pouring a stream of rancid butter over his matted locks.

The dress of the men, from the king to the peasant, consists in a large loose robe of thick cotton cloth, enveloping the body in graceful folds; but nearly incapacitating the wearer from any great exertion on foot; frequently disconcerted and falling upon the ground, the wearer is every moment obliged to tuck up this most troublesome garment, and fold it anew about his body; a cotton waist cloth of many yards encircles the loins, and a pair of very wide trowsers hanging barely to the knee, sum up the ordinary toilet; although during journeys and expeditions, the skin of some wild animal fashioned somewhat into the form of a cloak is worn over the shoulder.

20. All carry a short crooked sword bound tight on the right side, which requires constant oiling, and some portion of personal strength to extract from the sheath; and entertaining a wonderful affection for the stick, no man ever stirs from the house, either mounted or on foot, without the long thin wand. Too lengthy to be of any use in urging on his animal, and too thin to support any weight as a staff, the inconveni-

ence is endured to keep the hand in constant practice for carrying the beloved spear. The clergy are more sensible in their predilections, and their stout staff with an iron crutch as a handle, is a very laudable instrument indeed, either for support or offence.

21. The men scrupulously denude their cheeks and chins, in the absence of the razor clipping with a pair of very indifferent scissors all the hair close to the skin, and thus adding very considerably to the dirty appearance of their unwashed faces; but the greatest attention is paid to the management of the hair, with which nature has most liberally supplied the head, and many hours are daily expended in dressing the mop into many and quaint fashions. It is sometimes worn hanging in long clustering ringlets over the cheeks and the neck; at other times frizzed into rounded matted protuberances, which are studded over the greasy block, often fancifully tucked and trimmed into small rows of minute curls like a judge's wig, and again boldly parted into four large compartments like jelly moulds, but always reeking with rancid butter, and exuding a most disagreeable effluvia.

22. The clergy wear a high white cotton head-dress and black woollen cloak, with coloured emblems of the faith attached in every direction for public view. Treated with highest respect and veneration, they are always addressed as Father, caressed and fed wherever they choose to turn their footsteps; all the natives fully believing that the kissing the hand of one of these dirty shepherds, purifies the body from every sin.

23. The colour of the Abyssinian race varies from a bright copper to the deep jet black; the men are by no means particularly handsome, but the features of the women are of an inferior and more disagreeable contour than those of most nations in the world. Small eyes and flat noses are added to high cheek bones, low foreheads and a broad expanse of countenance, and their attempts are exceedingly ingenious to render more hideous the uncomely appearance which nature has thought proper to bestow upon them.

24. The eye-brows are totally depilated, and a deep narrow line painted in their room with a strong permanent blue dye, bestowing a more than ordinary look of foolishness, whilst the cheeks of the high-born dames are plastered to the very eyes with red paint and fat; the hair is also either cropped, frizzed and besmeared with tallow

into a most frightful consistency, resembling in appearance and size an ordinary English bee-hive, or the bare shaven head is encircled by a narrow dirty fillet; and their feet, naked and exposed to all seasons and weather, become hard, horny and mis-shapen.

25. Their only dress consists of a large wide sack chemise, bound round the waist by a thin rag, and a long sheet thrown over the head descending to the heels, which like Ruth's veil is very coarse and strong, and fully capable of containing six measures of wheat. Their ornaments are large black wooden studs in the ear, which on holidays are replaced by masses of pewter resembling the teething rattles employed in nurseries; pewter bracelets and anklets, together with a profusion of blue and gold colored beads are worn by all who can afford the outlay, and the dirty toilet is not complete without a stream of rancid butter upon the hair, and the nostrils securely plugged up with lime peel or sweet herbs, leaving the end of this strange nosegay dangling over the wide mouth. They soon ripen and grow old, girls becoming mothers at the early age of twelve; but like the fruit of the medlar, they are rotten before the summer of life has well commenced.

26. All classes are most pertinacious beggars, every thing seen is demanded; knives, scissors, beads, cloth, looking glasses and dollars; the love of acquiring property stifles every sense of shame, and they feel no compunction in asking for the cloak off your back, or of carrying it away, even during a heavy storm of rain; they even take a pride in this national feeling, and say, that an Abyssinian child will stretch out its hand to receive a present before it be born; and their tradition hands down as most praiseworthy the conduct of one of their great chiefs, who on his death-bed desired his body to be buried in the track of a caravan, that if possible his spirit in the future state might be in the way of receiving a toll from the passing merchant.

27. Warm butter mixed with honey and the seeds of the *hubbesh*, is given to an infant immediately on its birth, and circumcision follows on children of both sexes on the seventh day. The operation, performed generally by an old Galla woman, is exceedingly painful, and is often followed, especially in females, by the most serious consequences in some districts. A male child is carried in the hands of men to the Church on the fortieth day, and a female is borne by .

women on the eightieth, when it is christened after the Abyssinian ritual. The right of bestowing the name upon the boy belongs to the father, whilst the mother exclusively chooses one for her daughter. A grand entertainment to the priests finishes the ceremony, and the bearers of the infant to the church are considered its Godfathers and Godmothers, and are expected to treat the child with all affection during the scenes of after-life.

28. Invariably it is carried tied up in a bag at the mother's back until it can walk; the cramped confinement seemingly produces no evil result upon the symmetry of the child, and the extra burden interferes but lightly with the severe labour which in this country is the lot of the hard-worked female.

29. Education is at a very low ebb indeed, and those children are alone instructed in the rudiments of learning, who are intended for the service of the Church, or for the priestly office. The five churches of Ankobar have each their small quota of scholars, but the amount altogether does not reach 80 out of a population in the capital of 8,000; the remainder run loose and disorderly like wild colts, until the season arrives when they are caught to be employed in drudgery.

30. After the age of 5 or 6, they are employed as servants, and set to work in the fields, and to fetch wood and water for the family, and the greater part at the age of 12 or 14 forsake the paternal residence to seek a livelihood in the service of the king or the great men, and as their pittance is but scanty, they can save nought from their wages, and are thus forced to remain in servitude during the residue of their existence. The favorite son remains with his father; begins to have some authority in the management of affairs about the age of 15; then chooses for himself a wife, and engages in the usual avocations of tilling the ground, repairing the house, and attending the king's military expeditions.

31. A girl is reckoned, according to the value of her property; and the heiress of a house, a field, and a bedstead is certain to add a husband to her list before many suns have shone over her head. In Shoa, marriage is generally concluded by the parties declaring before witnesses, that by the life of the king, they intend to live happily together, and the property of each being produced is carefully valued. A mule

or an ass, a dollar, a shield and some spears on the one side are noted against the lady's stock of wheat, cotton and bedstead; the bargain being struck, the property becomes joint for the time, until some quarrel ensues, when each taking their own, depart to seek fresh mates.

32. Men and women eat together at the same table, and most affectionately pick out the choicest morsels from the common dish, and stuff them into each other's mouths at arm's length. The appearance of the large foolish black face bending over the table, with the wide gaping mouth to receive the proffered tit-bit of raw flesh, which from its size requires considerable strength of finger to cram into the open aperture is sufficiently ludicrous, and brings forcibly to the recollection the nest of toad-like sparrows in the garden hedge at home gaping to the wanton whistle of the truant schoolboy. The meals are generally taken twice during the day, once at noon and again after sunset.

33. There exist two sorts of marriage, the one before-mentioned, and another which is celebrated by the Church somewhat in a similar fashion to our own; the parties swearing to take each other for life, in richness and poverty, sickness or health, which is ratified by partaking together of the sacrament, and by the usual oath of the country, the king's life. The inhabitants of Shoa, however, do not relish this fast binding, and the ceremony is seldom requested or performed.

34. Favorite slaves and concubines are equally respected as wedded wives, and there is no difference between legitimate and bastard children. The example set by the monarch, who in addition to his lawful spouses, entertains upon his establishment upwards of 500 concubines, is followed by all who can afford the expense; and the wandering life of the court renders the system of concubinage more agreeable, and less expensive, than the continual movement of legal wives and families.

35. The king dwells only for a time at one palace, and then proceeds to another at some distance, accompanied by all his chief officers, courtiers, and domestics. Fresh female establishments are invariably entertained at the new station; all conjugal affection is lost sight of, and these women being in time cast aside in neglect, as well as the forsaken wives, proceed in their turn to seduce the young men, and thus profligacy reigns paramount among all classes of society. There are

indeed few couples who live any time together without violating the conjugal bed, the matter not being particularly regarded, and a beating being the only punishment inflicted upon the offending party.

36. Lost to all sense of shame, many of the libertine inhabitants keep their wives and concubines under the same roof, the favorite for the time being having all authority over the rest, who submit in the meekest manner without repining to the thralldom of the degrading situation. Nay, they even declare, that it is better to have some one to talk to, even though she be the supplanter of affection, than to remain solitary in a lone house by themselves; nor are these grovelling sentiments to be much wondered at, when we consider that the jewel, chastity, is here as pearls before swine, and that the utmost extent of reparation to be recovered in a court of justice for the most aggravated case of seduction is but five pennies sterling!

37. Morality is indeed at the very lowest ebb, for here there is neither custom nor inducement to be chaste, and beads, more precious than gold, bear down every barrier of restraint; honesty and modesty both yield to the force of temptation, and pride is seldom offended by living in a state of idle dependence on others. The soft savage requires but little inducement to follow the bent of her evil passions according to the dictates of unenlightened nature, and the rules of the loose society form no obstacle whatever to the entire gratification of her vicious desire.

38. Christian only in name, the nation is plunged in a filthy quagmire of bestial indulgence, and is stiff-necked and puffed up with the most inordinate self-pride. There is little chance of their benighted minds receiving voluntarily one single ray of good to enlighten their spiritual darkness. Founding every hope of salvation in the preservation of weary fasts, in the performance of vain ceremonies, and in the belief of ridiculous doctrines, they consider that faith in the true word is but an empty sound, and that kissing the stones of Jerusalem availeth rather than all the good works which can be compassed during a long lifetime.

39. Death closes the weary scene of barbarous licentiousness, and is met with the usual stoicism of the savage. On the demise being fully ascertained, the body is washed with warm water, and wrapped up in sundry cotton cloths according to the wealth of the family, the amulets and *mahtah* of the deceased are also immersed in liquid, and being

restored to the body, all are carefully enclosed within the folds of the cloth, and secured by several new cords ; then commences the frantic shrieks of the women, and the cries of the female mourners, which are of the most melancholy and distressing description, the low moaning dirge of the old women being interrupted at intervals by the hysterical sob of the principal sufferer, who is bereft of all she held dear upon earth. For a time grief is most extravagantly indulged, the cloth is torn in shreds from the bosom, and the skin plentifully scarified from the temples, whilst the moaning and wailing continue, and group after group from the neighbouring houses pour in to add their voices to the dismal corodach, which swells on high from the death hut, and incite by their ejaculations, fresh bursts of lamentation from the survivors.

40. The corpse is then carried to the grave, which varies in depth from two to four feet, and is buried with the feet towards the East, that on the resurrection, the face may be towards the rising sun. A feast to the relatives concludes the ceremony, and the dirge of mourning gives place to the notes of the violin, harpers and fiddlers generally accompanying the funeral procession of all great men, and using their utmost endeavour to entertain the returning party by their liveliest airs. Should death occur during the night, the priests are instantly called to the scene, and by the blazing light of the torch prayers are chaunted until morning for the soul of the deceased ; but on ordinary occasions, the body is carried to the cemetery half an hour after the departure of the breath.

41. A small quantity of *loban* is often deposited in the grave, together with the book called *sefafa zedick*, and the kings alone are honored with coffins manufactured of wood perforated with many apertures ; these are placed on stone trestles amidst clouds of frankincense, and kept in this situation until the body becomes dried up, when the coffin is removed into the mausolcum, the walls of which are generally bedaubed with pictures, intended to represent the hunting and military actions of the royal occupant.

42. Priests alone possess the right of interment on the eastern side of the church, four paces from the porch. The aristocracy occupy the North, and warriors, women and children the South and West. All who die of *syphilis*, without confession or absolution, are either interred by the wayside, or in unconsecrated ground. Governors, men

of rank, and all wealthy commoners who have not, during life, worked in wood, iron or precious metals, are covered in the grave with the green branches of juniper; but smiths and artificers being looked upon as sorcerers, every care is taken to keep them under the ground when once deposited; great stones being heaped over the body, and the earth well secured and trampled afterwards under foot.

43. The funeral of an individual of reputed sanctity is attended by numbers of the priesthood with the great umbrellas of the Church, wherein the corpse is placed for a time, and surrounded by twelve lighted tapers betokening purity of life, which when nearly consumed are, lowered with the bier into the sepulchre. Ecclesiastics occasionally enjoy the privilege of a last resting place within the precincts of the sacred edifice; the pall consisting of a piece of printed Surat chintz is supported by six bearers, who wave it alternately with a fanning motion, whilst a numerous train of mourners follow amidst loud wails, with their hands clasped behind the neck, in token of the triumph obtained by death over sin.

44. During forty days, requiems are daily chaunted for the soul of the departed, and charity in proportion to the estate left, is distributed both on the day of interment and on several succeeding anniversaries. Oxen and sheep are freely slaughtered at the *tes-car*, or funeral feast, and all who choose to attend receive their portion in honor of the deceased.

45. Black or yellow garments, or ordinary dresses steeped in mire are worn indiscriminately as weeds—the period of mourning extending to one year; and on the death of a friend or relative, male or female, both sexes scarify the temples by removing a circular piece of skin, about the size of a sixpence from each, with the nail of the little finger, which is purposely suffered to grow like an eagle's talon. This custom, borrowed like many others from Judaism, is generally practised throughout the kingdom; scarcely an individual being free from the disfiguring scars, although in opposition to a royal interdiction, which was proclaimed throughout Shoa, in consequence of an ecclesiastical remonstrance to the throne, representing the custom to be in direct violation of the written law: "Thou shalt not cut thy face for the sake of the dead."

46. Although three military expeditions are undertaken every year, the nation is by no means either a martial or a chivalrous one. Few

individuals are pointed out as being possessed of even common bravery, and the high honor and esteem in which they are held, evince the absence of this virtue among the rest. The principle of bullying the weaker party may be distinctly traced in every form and relation of life, and much of the mean subserviency and respect of the inferior may be justly attributed to the well-known consequences of arousing the dread anger of the superior.

47. Their system of war is entirely predatory, and consists of successively overwhelming with immense masses of men solitary tribes in the vicinity, taking the unsuspecting foe by surprise; massacring all the males of the family; sweeping off into captivity the maids, widows and cattle; and utterly burning and devastating fields, houses, and farm stock: but there is seldom any fighting; the unfortunate Galla is taken completely unaware; those who have swift horses at hand make their escape to their hiding places, and the unlucky remnant are shot down, speared and emasculated without mercy: a few only offering any resistance to the numbers who surround the devoted band.

48. A very different scene, however, presents itself when timely intimation is carried to the tribes of the destination of the locust army of the Amhara; the women and cattle are sent to the fastnesses, and the men assemble mounted on their light, active and well broken steeds. The invaders halt at the sight, for the courage of the Amhara is not sufficient to carry him into fair fight with an armed foe, and after a little skirmishing at a distance, the intruding numbers retire before the few, until some more favorable opportunity occurs of dealing the death-blow in the dark.

49. But the Gallas, from their better acquaintance with the localities of the country, oftentimes make the invader pay dearly for the spoil, and more especially when entangled in a morass these wild riders charge splashing through the swamp at full speed, and cut the bewildered Amhara to pieces. Whilst returning from a late successful surprise, His Majesty had the deep mortification on coming up with the plunder and rear division, to find his advanced guard nearly annihilated, and the bodies of 800 of his most distinguished warriors lying trampled in the mud as a bloody memento of the successful rush of the Pagans, who were lining the tops of the surrounding hills in utter derision of his remaining force. Many of the Galla tribes, also of the Loomi,

the Aroosi and the Ittoo, still hold their own, and have by repeated defeats, taught the Amhara to beware of the close conflict.

50. The spear, the sword, and the buckler, are the national weapons, although the use of fire-arms is partially known and fully appreciated, and the king's company of fusileers is gradually increasing in number, to his own advantage, and to the consternation of his enemies; but the habitual suspicions of the monarch prevents the native from being made thoroughly acquainted with the use of the firelock, the arms being always deposited within the walls of the palace, excepting during the actual period of the expedition, and ill-judged parsimony works its usual baneful effects on the minds of the hired soldier.

51. Combining the halberd with the javelin, the spear is used both for thrusting and throwing, loaded at the butt with a stout ring of iron; it is short, light, with a keen long iron head, and well balanced, but better adapted for launching as a missive weapon. The Abyssinian, from constant practice, is well versed in its use, and after poising it for a time over his head, displays considerable accuracy of aim at any distance within sixty yards of the mark.

52. It may be generally said, that swords of civilized nations are straight, whilst those of barbarous people are curved. The Abyssinian implement, which is frequently represented in old Egyptian paintings, is very short, hardly two feet in length, very highly recurved, and fashioned out of very bad metal indeed; altogether it is a most ridiculous weapon of war, and would prove of but small service, if opposed to any of the modern inventions. After the fashion of the ancient Persians and Romans, it is worn on the right side, and is more like a short reaping sickle with the back sharpened than a sword; it is chiefly employed after the spear has finished the work of death, to complete the work of mutilation of the body.

53. The terrible effect which attended these weapons in ancient times is not to be witnessed among the dastard sons of Shoa. "The horseman indeed lifteth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear," but "there is no multitude slain," and if beat into ploughshares and pruning hooks, the metal would prove of much greater service to the nation in their agricultural pursuits, and of equal avail in braining a defenceless Galla, their only enemies acquainted with the art of war.

54. The buckler, resembling the Roman clypeus is made of a good tough bull's hide, or cut from the hardened skin of the wild buffaloe ; it is of large dimensions and well studded with silver and brass crosses and ornaments, and being conveniently portable, can be turned with the greatest ease to ward off the threatened blow of the coming missile. Anointed and rubbed with oil, as a preservative against cracking and injury from the weather, this defensive armour is generally stowed in a cotton bag, and on the return of a triumphant army, is frequently presented as a votive offering, and hung on the vestibule of a church. When not worn on the arm, it depends from the high pommel of the saddle, and "the bull skin border of the bossy shield" protects the leg from all the crushing and kicking, invariably experienced in the disorderly array of the Amhara rabble.

55. The troops move in masses under their respective governors and leaders, and take any direction they choose, provided they do not interfere with His Majesty's particular route, or go before the state umbrellas. The king's concubines and women follow on mules immediately behind their lord and master, and a band of 30 bearers of the royal silver shields preserve the faint line in front of the confused mass of succeeding horsemen, who are kept from intruding too near the sacred person of Majesty, by the strenuous efforts of the master of the horse and his assistants, who lay about lustily with their ratans, without much regard to rank or station.

56. The striking of the royal suite of tents, which is pitched enclosed in a compound of black woollen walls, is the signal for packing up, and at the beat of the drum and the sound of the horn, the king, bare-headed as Masinissa of old, issues forth about 9 o'clock, when the mass follow in his route. On His Majesty's dismounting to proceed on foot across the meadows, all follow his example ; the march is seldom very lengthy, and the household ladies' alighting from their mules is the signal for the halt ; a general rush at speed takes place from all directions of the host, for the purpose of securing a good grassy spot for the bivouac, and fierce wrangling, and often times quarrels and bloodshed ensue, before the array is quietly located for the night. None have tents except the king and a few of his great governors, and like the black woollen awnings of Kedar, they are warm and of a close texture, and are kept firmly erect by loops fixed to hooked wooden pegs.

57. His Majesty is welcomed to the capital by a strain of triumphant music from every throat in the army, whilst all the successful warriors decked out in their gayest attire, and vaunting trophies dangling beneath gauntlets and bracelets of silver, careering in front, slowly progress before the royal person in a mazy labyrinth of reticulated circles. The air is rent with shrill whoops and yells, which are answered by the thrilling welcome of the women pealing from the palace and every part of the town, whilst the thundering war song is shouted from the dense phalanx closing the procession.

The priests receive their royal master with a blessing, and the unceasing clang of big drums, together with frequent discharges of musketry and artillery, fill up the pageant.

58. From the most remote ages, the glittering bracelet has been always the badge of bravery. The Amalekite, who slew the warrior Saul, took the bracelet that was upon his arm and brought it to David. In some parts of the East they are still used in the investiture of gallant chiefs; and the celebrated armlet of Persia surmounted by the great diamond "the crown of the moon," is not more valued by its royal possessor, than the ring of brass which encircles the wrist of the Amhara. The gauntlet, the spoils of the lion, the armlet and the *aqua-dama*, each advance the warrior in the scale of honor and credit, and when the matted locks are crowned by the white feather of the Hirkom, or the green sprig of wild asparagus, the most frightful tales of blood proceed in streams from the mouth, and there is no deed sufficiently daring for the prowess of the braggart. But it is well known, that many are ornamented who have never proved themselves in the field, even according to their own base ideas of fight. The lie is brought to the rescue of the coward reputation, and the emblems of bravery are often exhibited, on spilling the blood of the most inferior vermin; but blood is the sacrifice demanded, and it matters little whether it be poured from the veins of the Christian or the Galla, from the elephant or from the mouse; the war song is shouted on every available opportunity, even on the accidental destruction of a rat, and all would fain appear martial and chivalrous, glorying in the name of the "bravest of the brave."

59. The principal materials employed in the most ancient crowns and chaplets were wreaths of flowers and leaves, which were afterwards

substituted by imitations in metals. The idea of the *aqua-dama* might have been taken from the tendrils of a creeper hanging in clusters from a massive branch of the Weira tree, and the ornament is certainly deserving of much praise for its singular beauty and fanciful form. A transverse bar of worked silver worn across the brow over a thick row of ornamented pendants reaching to the eyes, and branches of light chains depending at intervals completely round the head, fall in a glittering mass to the waist, whilst a worked coronet rises high above the bar, and is profusely cut into open figures and highly wrought crosses.

60. The gauntlet is generally made of silver, and reaches from the wrist to the elbow, and the armlet is an unmeaning hollow ring of silver, resembling in size and clumsiness rather a manacle to secure a wild colt, than an ornament for a Christian man.

61. The travelling equipment of a man of rank is very simple indeed, and a few attendants or a sumpter mule suffice to carry all requisites for the journey. His wants are but few—a loaf of bread and a horn of mead for his sustenance, and a skin for his bedding; the cotton robe serves him for covering by day and by night, and he can always find some shelter at the end of the march, which is little inferior to what he had been accustomed at home.

62. Ambling along upon his mule gaily bedecked with bells and brass ornaments, with a running footman on each side, he takes the road early in the morning, followed by a party of retainers according to his means. Immediately behind his person, the confidential shield-bearer takes precedence, his steward rides nearly abreast to hold a share in the conversation, and the remainder of the train, some with load and on foot, but all armed with sword and spear follow, as they choose, a noisy motley group, without order or regularity. They are, however, attached to their master from long service and kind treatment, and in many ordinary transactions swear by his name, instead of that of the ruling monarch.

63. A stage of 25 or 32 miles is considered long, and indeed the high hills to be ascended, and deep valleys to be crossed, render it wearisome to traverse even that distance; the general pace is the common step of the mule, about 3 miles an hour, but when the road is level, the amble is increased to 5, and those on foot are accustomed to keep up with the mounted party. A saddled horse is often led in the train, a custom

handed down from the former generation, when the country was not in such a settled state as it is at present, and when the traveller was obliged to keep a weary and vigilant look out for parties of roving Galla, and to give battle on the moment, if the occasion required ; but Sabila Salassie has wonderfully improved matters during his long reign, and now, if provided with the necessary royal permission, an unarmed man can pass through any part of the hereditary dominions of Shoa, without scath to limb or property.

64. As the king's guest, the traveller is in general treated with some degree of respect, which is, however, entirely owing to the despot's wishes, and the fear of consequences unbars the door of the house and throws open the stores for the consumption of man and beast ; but a churlish reception would most probably await the unfortunate who travelled through the country without the king's permission ; and a well-stocked purse, or a well-filled portmanteau, would not invariably produce a salutary effect, as the savage has always some plan or idea in abeyance, to obtain any curious article exposed to his admiring view, without the necessity of imparting aught of value in exchange. Under every advantage, and attended by the king's household officers, it is extremely difficult at times to obtain the most simple and necessary supplies, and force is frequently resorted to, to extract these articles for which the most liberal payment has been tendered beforehand ; but there always exists along with the desire to acquire property, an innate dislike to part with aught the most trifling, and even among the higher classes, the small request of a stick or a spear is peremptorily refused to parties, who have heretofore loaded the ingrate with the richest imaginable presents.

65. A great man on coming to the capital if unprovided with a house of his own, is certain to find ready accommodation always with the inmates of any of the lower description of dwellings, who are all willing, for a trifling consideration, to remove their bullock hides, and allow the grand visitor the free use of the apartment, such as it is. They will also cook the victuals of the stranger and his followers, if of the same religious persuasion as themselves, and remain content with a very small remuneration indeed.

66. His Majesty, however, in general, has tents pitched for all great men, and liberally supplies them with food, both at his own table and in

the presentation of the '*Dingo*,' an established allowance granted from the royal kitchen, bread, mead and pepper, soup daily, and sheep and bullocks being occasionally distributed to upwards of a thousand people, who are on the list as masters of *Dingo*. Every stranger who comes to the kingdom is amply provided for, and indeed all who make their necessities or their wishes known on the subject, have no reason whatever to complain of any want of liberality on the part of the sovereign of Shoa.

67. From the excess of cultivation on the table land, there are few wild animals, except hyenas, hares and field rats; the death of an otter is considered a rare feat of prowess, and badgers are avoided as the 'devil's sheep,' and the few that burrow in the hills are viewed with very great distrust. Partridges and guinea fowl are hunted down with dogs placed on successive ranges, who, fresh from the nearest station, pursue the quarry the moment he finishes his fight, and very soon pick up the wearied bird. In the low country, the larger animals, elephants, lions, buffaloes, rhinoceros and many species of antelope exist in considerable numbers, and as each has a relative value in the scale of honor reckoned according to Galla heads, the brave warriors on the frontier do contrive, at lengthy intervals between, to compass the death of some.

68. A large body, consisting of several hundreds proceed on horseback to the cover, armed with every available weapon, and worry the animal to death according to the usual approved system of Abyssinian bullying, riding after him till he is brought to bay, and pouring showers of bullets and lances from a distance into his carcase on the first convenient opportunity; but these hunts are often undertaken without success, and seldom conclude without many fatal accidents. The valiant thrower of the first spear is entitled to the honorary reward from the king at the triumph at entry into the capital, which is attended by the same ceremonies and rejoicings as the advent of a successful military expedition against the heathen Galla. The elephant is reckoned equal to 40 Galla, the lion to 7, and all the other large animals to 5 Galla, killed in battle.

69. A good equestrian, and a tolerable marksman, His Majesty is in the habit of making Saturday excursions attended by many hundred followers to some favourite retreat, where he remains for hours, shooting what the country chiefly affords, *i. e.* baboons, vultures and wild ducks;

but the Amhara has altogether a very indistinct idea of woodcraft. One of the chiefs burning with the desire to emulate the white men in the distinction of an elephant, lately proceeded to the jungles with a retinue of 1000 adherents, and a large party of the king's gun-men; but after fruitlessly spending a month in the covers, he was fain to return without having destroyed any thing of larger dimensions than a spotted monkey. Hyenas are suffered to multiply to a great extent in some parts of the country, owing to the superstition of the natives, who firmly believe that Jewish sorcerers descend from the mountains during the night, and transform themselves into the likeness of these foul animals, and that in consequence, there would be no good result in the pursuit.

70. The bulk of the nation is indeed decidedly agricultural, although it appears somewhat strange that the minds of the people are not more disturbed and upset by the continual military expeditions they are forced to make against the Galla. Probably the selfishness of the despot in appropriating the lion's share of the spoil has most salutary effect in checking innate restlessness, and the Abyssinian is taught in a rough school to understand fully, that there is more profit to be obtained from holding the plough than from wielding the sword, and it is certainly the fact, that when the foray is over, the war horse is turned loose in the meadow, and the partisan willingly applies himself, according to his means, as usual, to his peaceful avocations among the fields.

71. Mounting on the left side with the assistance of their spear, the natives when seated do not by any means ride well, though they do not very often tumble from their horses or mules, owing to the high fortifications of wood and leather which are built upon the saddle to protect the rider in front and rear; and although they can carry a horse at speed over bad ground, their seat is awkward and ungainly, and they have no idea whatever of easing an animal in his distress. Bitted in the most cruel and barbarous manner, they bear as heavy as lead upon the bridle rein, and no horse is ever five minutes in the hands of an Amhara without having his mouth pulled to pieces, and the blood streaming as the tortured animal tosses his head in the air for relief.

72. The sojourner in Abyssinia can easily believe what Bruce relates concerning his recorded instance of cruelty to animals, for although it is not fair to brand the nation with a foul stigma resting on a solitary fact, yet there is no good reason to disbelieve the veracity of the traveller;

and other facts have been also witnessed which exceed in horror even what has been related of the soldiers of Northern Abyssinia. On the first military expedition to which the British Embassy was invited, on the evening of the successful foray, the limb of a sheep was most wantonly severed from the live animal with a sword when the wretched beast refused to proceed further, and the mutilated trunk left bleeding upon the ground, to be hacked piece-meal alive by any in the rear of the column of savages who had no store of provender. That the flesh might have been served up quivering with the life-blood is also extremely probable, though it might not necessarily have been taken from the living beast, for the animal is invariably killed at the very door of the eating house, and it takes but a short time after the breath is out of the carcase to hand up the raw meat to the feast. Whatever might have been the custom 80 years ago, now-a-days, the animal is invariably in the first instance killed after a fashion.

73. A rush of 10 or 12 men is made on the victim, his legs and horns are seized as a purchase, he is thrown upon the ground, when the throat is hacked through with a blunt knife in the name of the Holy Trinity, and the poor beast is left to struggle and stagger about until the lifeblood be expended; then commences an indiscriminate onslaught of knives, swords and hatchets, without the preliminary operations of skinning and cleansing. Bigotted to a degree, the animal if killed by the hand of a Moslem is considered in the highest degree impure, and reckoned on the list of even lower esteem than the unhallowed flesh of pigs and bears, geese, and wild fowl.

74. The Abyssinian in general is too well acquainted with the value of his own live-stock to urge him beyond his powers unmercifully, and often performs a great portion of the journey on foot rather than distress the animal to his own loss; but his treatment of Galla prisoners, and the almost certain dreadful fate which awaits any old or useless male who falls into his hands, is a sufficient blot upon the Christian name, without the addition of any other crime whatever.

75. Here, as elsewhere, eating is one of the most important concerns of life, and on the days of the great festivals, the palace displays all the pomp remaining in the land, and the unusual sight of the population somewhat aroused from their customary state of lethargic bestiality; the stair cases are lined with groups of priests and monks in their holiday

suits, and the courts are filled to overflowing with the chiefs and nobles, who on these gala days cast aside their abhorrence for the use of water, and appear dressed in clean white robes.

76. The king reclines in state on his best velvet cushions, and the royal alcove is tricked out with gay gold cloths and massive silver ornaments; seated on the ground immediately before the presence, are his most devoted and valiant governors, and around his couch swarm a group of young pages, the tableau being most probably taken from the Old Scripture pictures, where cherubs are so profusely introduced surrounding the principal figure. A long line of attendants stretching on either side of the throne stand as fixtures against the walls, each bearing in his right hand a straight silver sheathed falchion. The room is of large dimensions, and the height and gloomy ceiling in some degree compensate for the absence of architectural decorations, whilst the lofty walls are relieved by a display of all the state shields, which are profusely studded with silver bosses, crosses, and ornaments, and depending from each buckler the velvet mantle droops gracefully by its side, glittering in every hue and color of the rainbow.

77. At an early hour, a horse-shoe table is extended the entire length of the dwelling, and is so entirely heaped with viands, that not a twig of the wicker work is visible beneath the load. Piles of wheaten cakes touching each other, and strewed with fragments of fowls, tower up two feet above the surface. Bowls of rich curry, decoctions of red pepper, flanked by bottles of old hydromel, heap the groaning board, and numerous slaves are ranged at intervals with large baskets of delicate raw flesh, which has been just stripped from the slaughtered bullock.

78. The preparations for the feast are completed by 8 o'clock in the morning, when the great doors are thrown open, and a burst of wild music from the king's band ushers in the company; four hundred sit down on the floor at a time, ranged in double row besides the table, the chief men in the front rank, and every justice is done to His Majesty's hospitality. The piles soon sink beneath the active attacks of the guests, and the rising hum proclaims that the hydromel is of the most potent quality. Numerous attendants are in waiting to administer to the wants of the honored guests, by handing with their fingers from the viands whatever is desired, and a piece of meat if not relished by the first person into whose hand it falls, is passed to the next inferior,

and thus runs its course down to the individual, whose rank incapacitates him from rejecting the proffered morsel.

79. During the repast, the fiddlers and harpers who are stationed in the opening of the horse-shoe, dance and sing to the notes of their instruments, and ever and anon the shrill notes of some "Asmaree" stationed in a corner of the hall, rise thundering to the very roof, in acclamation of the generosity, hospitality, and magnificence of the great emperor of the Amhara.

80. After the guests are fully satisfied with food, the company rise, and each being provided with a large horn of mead, lounges against the walls to complete the inebriation which has been but partially effected at the table, whilst crowds of well dressed female slaves speedily replenish the diminished structures of food and liquor.

81. The great doors are again thrown open, and a fresh set enter amidst the increasing din, and the entertainment is continued till late in the afternoon; etiquette enforcing on these occasions the presence of the monarch throughout the entire time. Hundreds of bullocks are devoured, together with many more measures of wheat than can be well conceived; but altogether considerable decorum is preserved, and although the guests reach a maudlin state of drunkenness, yet the presence of the king is generally respected, and the exuberance of incited mirth expends itself in harmless praises of the royal host.

82. Such, however, is not the case at private parties, the curb of constraint is allowed to fall loose, the fierce passions gain along with the liquor the entire ascendancy, and guests seldom return to their homes, without witnessing the broil and the scuffle, the flashing of the swords, and the dealing of deep cuts and wounds among the drunken combatants.

83. Sunday is the great day for feasting, and is universally believed to have been designed for the express purpose of eating and stuffing. Men do not labour in the fields, women abstain from grinding and sewing cloths; and although other work is carried on as on ordinary week days, the chief employment for all who can afford it, is to pass the entire time in eating, drinking, and sleeping.

84. The influence of the evil eye is supposed to have little or no avail within the palace walls, and the great door is suffered to remain open during the operation of eating; but elsewhere it is scrupulously

barred and closed, and a fire is invariably lighted before the peasant, who will on no account appease his hunger, labouring under the strange superstition, that otherwise the devils would enter during the dark, and that there would be no blessing upon the meat.

85. It has been conjectured by Pliny, that the orientals received their first hints of building from the swallow, and that in imitation of their feathered instructor, their first attempts were made in clay. Where the Abyssinians obtained their ideas on this subject it were hard to tell, but certainly they have made little progress in architectural design, and their houses, constructed as in the earliest day, are still mere frameworks, sparingly daubed over with a thin coat of mud. Here thieves can easily break through and steal, and the materials are of such a flimsy nature, that the morning sun oftentime rises a witness to the truth of the scriptural metaphor: "He built his house upon the sand, and it was swept away by the rising flood."

86. Of the rudest description, these hovels are composed of mud and rotten twigs, and perfectly pervious to the inclemencies of the season, they subject the occupants, from the cold damp air, to all the pains of rheumatism and catarrh. There are no conveniences in the shape of glass or other transparent substances, and if the door be closed on the dense unhealthy fog and the cold bleak wind, all possibility is denied of admitting light; the thermometer rarely rises above 65 degrees, indicating the necessity for artificial heat, whilst there exists no vent for the smoke, excepting through the door and the cracked apertures in the walls.

87. In the town, from the want of sewers and drains, the inhabitants are obliged to live like swine in the filth of their own styes, inhaling all the effluvia of decomposing matter and putrifying water; the comfort of space is never consulted, passages and out-houses are far beyond the intention of the proprietor, and with doors allowing full ingress to injurious currents of air, with roofs admitting the rain, and floors covered with unwholesome damp, it is surprising that many more of the inhabitants are not made martyrs to disease. Some few years ago, epidemic dysentery made its appearance at Ankobar, and as might have been expected, rioted to excess in the foul location. One-half of the population was swept away, and the remnant fled for a time from the hill, which they declared to be blasted by a curse from heaven.

88. In the country, there is no attention whatever paid to cleanliness or comfort. The stagnant dunghill is carried by the descending rain but a few yards from the walls, and the cattle and poultry are allowed to share the general apartment ; misery and confinement are strikingly pourtrayed in the worn-out thatch and the wattle stockade which surrounds the farm steading, whilst the inmates themselves, although supplied with an ample sufficiency to sustain the mere necessities of life, exist amid dirt and vermin, without experiencing much comfort even in the moments of their very highest enjoyment.

89. It is the practice of this uncivilized country to keep the demise of royalty a profound secret so long as possible, in order to avert the anarchy and confusion that would not fail to occur during an interregnum, when every individual in the kingdom considers himself at full liberty to act according to the best of his imagination, without fear of punishment. Whilst there is no king there is no law, is the maxim in Shoa, and the foulest crimes are committed with the most perfect impunity. On the news of the death of Assfawoosun, the streets of Debra Sibanoo ran red with blood, and 800 victims were immolated to private malice and revenge, before the appointment of his successor was proclaimed, and justice and order re-established on their seats.

90. At other times also, the great Christian maxim is too apt to be forgotten. The Abyssinian remembers only that he is savage, and revenge, as usual, takes up the first position in the mind. Many a dark deed has been cowardly enacted in the deep forest or in the confused skirmish, and the Gallas have been oftentimes most wrongfully accused of foul murder and death, when the victim has fallen under the assassin spear of his false comrade ; and indeed the rulers and leaders of armies are on this account always much disinclined to lead their forces through difficult woods and defiles, being well aware of the dread effects of Amhara treachery.

91. It is deeply to be lamented, that any nation whatever should esteem even the heads of the slain as the great emblem of victory, but the more atrocious and disgusting barbarity of Abyssinia, the base idea of which is so revolting to humanity, is the filthiest ceremony that ever disgraced any styling themselves a nation. The frailty of human nature is indeed discernable in the most legible characters, and he who witnessed the unhallowed proceeding cannot fail to offer up a fervent wish,

that the time may be hastened when nations shall be knit together in the bonds of love, and when true Christianity shall reign triumphant in every heart.

92. On the close of the foray, each follower who has slain a male creature ;—*murdered* would be the proper expression, for the grey hairs of venerable age and the tottering step of smiling infancy prove no safeguard to the ruffian monster ;—proceeds to mutilate the body, and carries off the token of his crime carefully preserved in the bloody folds of his waist cloth. The disgusting trophy after being prepared over the fire is hung dangling to the right wrist, and on the following day, each in his turn presents himself before the approving monarch, who halts at intervals at the time of march for the purpose of witnessing the foul exhibition. Group after group, dash in from the flocks, resounding their war song in chorus, and whilst brandishing their spears and their vile trophies, the lying murderers shout their prowess aloud :—“ I have destroyed my enemy in the open plain, I have rushed upon the foe, and slain him in the wood. I am the king’s great soldier, may Sabela Sellassie live for ever.” After the savage Christian has fully displayed his wanton cruelty he sinks prostrate to the ground, and by his mean grovelling subserviency, fills up the full measure of Abyssinian iniquity.*

93. All proclamations are made after beat of drum by the king’s heralds on the outside of the palace gateway, the removals and appointments of governors, the promulgation of religious doctrines, and His Majesty’s commands on all general subjects ; but the order of assemblage for the military expeditions issues forth in pithy language from below a small stunted tree at the foot of the palace hill of Angollala.

94. “ The king hath foes and is about to subdue them on a certain day, who fails to present himself at Zallo, armed and carrying provisions for the specified time shall be treated as an enemy, and shall forfeit his property during a period of seven years.” The penalty, however seldom requires enforcement, all the Amhara respond to the call with the ut-

* This horrible custom if not borrowed from the Jews, is probably of Galla origin, and is early mentioned as being practised on the coast of Africa, vide De Bry, 1599, De Caffrorium militio. “ Victores, victis cæsis et captis pudenda excidunt quæ exsiccata, regi in reliquorum procerum presentis offerunt.” This is a very ancient African custom. It is represented on the walls of the temples and tombs in Egypt. See the French Institute’s “ Description de L’Egypt.”—Eds.

most alacrity, for the insatiate love of blood and the inherent hatred of the heathen are sufficient inducements to quit home and family, and follow to the foray the great crimson umbrellas, in which they place the most unbounded confidence.

95. Every thing, however minute which is found by a subject, is carried straightway to His Majesty. The brass bowl of a pipe and a bottle of lunar caustic which were lost during the expedition were forthwith brought in by the finders, and restored. On his way to Angollala, a servant of the Reverend Mr. Kraff was swept away by the torrent in the Mosaliet river, and a tea kettle which he carried was lost; six months afterwards the utensil was found by a woman and taken to the king, who on being asked for it, said, "No, it will do for myself."

96. All presents received by the subject are also immediately carried to His Majesty for inspection, and it rarely happens that the individual is suffered to retain any part whatever. Brought before the sovereign as a peace-offering, the budget is generally received with an "*exogeer casto*," "God give you more," and forthwith transferred to the storehouse of finery which has been filling for ages. The more trivial portions of the present may be sometimes granted to the receiver as a wonderful mark of the monarch's favour; but in all cases, an equivalent in cattle or country cloths is afterwards made from the royal stores.

97. On the occasion of any loss by fire or other accidents, the begging sufferer makes the round of his acquaintance, who each contribute their mite to the subscription, and wonderful scope being given to imposition, the individual becomes more wealthy than before. Constant application is also made by the domestics of the royal household to obtain the price of destroyed articles, in order to save them from condign punishment. An offender was detected in bringing the same broken decanter three times over, and a shield was never said to have been broken or a mule lost, but the delinquent did not refer himself to the embassy for the amount of the fine.

98. Tainted with base servility, the Abyssinians pay the most abject respect to their superiors, and however aggrieved, are seldom heard to complain of the governor. The king is held in the highest adoration, and the oath by his life is the most binding in use. If adjured by this a person can be punished for non-compliance, and the wilful breaking the obligation renders the perjurers liable to severe penalties.

In addressing equals or children, the second person singular is used. Superiors are entitled to the third person plural, and disputes are easily excited, especially among the fanatic priesthood, by not paying sufficient attention to this point of etiquette.

99. Respect is here paid by prostration to the earth, and after the most degrading and humiliating fashion, bowing the face among the very dust, by uncovering the robe, and exposing the naked person, and by kissing the nearest inanimate object on entering a house.

100. The most grovelling adoration is paid to the monarch, and to many of his chiefs. All of whatever rank when they approach the presence, throw themselves prostrate upon the ground, lie flat on their faces, and knock their heads three times upon the earth. The inhabitants bend in the mire at the approach of His Majesty, and the troops of horsemen as they emerge from their different districts to join the military expedition before mingling with the general mass, stream at full speed to the vicinity of the royal umbrellas, and pulling up at a prescribed distance, spring from their saddles, and all simultaneous leaders and followers perform the degrading prostration.

101. Every native uncovers his person when in presence of or in conversation with the king, whilst to equals the corner of the robe is only removed for a time, and then suffered to resume its fold over the shoulder. Inferiors are obliged to stand continually unclothed in the company of their masters, and any small present bestowed upon the servant, must be received with both hands in a cringing position, whilst the nearest object, generally the threshold of the door, is kissed in token of devoted love and affection. Suspicions of treachery and revenge may have possibly originated this strange custom of uncovering the person, and the concealment of dangerous weapons is totally debarred, when the law is enforced of making all strip themselves so often during the course of the twenty-four hours.

102. Although not particularly addicted to the merry mood in general, and exceedingly ignorant withal of any thing resembling stage effect, yet the palace buffoon elicits shouts of laughter by his uncouth antics, and attempts to personate the character of the adjoining tribes, who are looked down upon with the utmost sovereign contempt; and on the days of interview with these wilder savages, who come dancing into the presence chaunting their war songs, and decked out with feathers and

warlike implements, the buffoon mixes in the dance and delights the Amhara spectators by the performance of his caricatured gestures ; but in this department the country can only boast of the king's mimic, who retains his situation without fear of rivalry ; here there is no field for genius, and it would prove a hard task for the jester to devise any thing more ludicrous or ridiculous than the ungraceful dance of the Amhara, the impassioned caper of her priests, or the idiotic whirl of her warriors.

103. Following the custom of the dark ages, dwarfs are treated with considerable fear, respect and consideration, and many of the most learned and praiseworthy in the land are to be found among the small misshapen race. The king's father confessor is of the most diminutive size, though possessed of great good feeling, and forming a striking contrast to the generality of his nation. The chiefs and nobles often choose their secretaries and household priests with reference to their tiny appearance, and the wisest man in the capital, whose charms and talismans are considered all powerful, and who knows every plant by heart from the "cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that creeps over the garden walls," sustains his character for lore, as much by the deformity of his appearance, as by the brilliancy of his understanding.

104. No petitioner ever enters the presence of his superiors unless furnished with an offering according to his means, as a bribe to propitiate favor and good-will. Cattle and honey, cloth, wood and money, and even stones being presented when building materials are scarce.

105. Presents are frequently exchanged among the chiefs and great men, and every display is attempted on the occasion, the train of bearers being lengthened out as much as possible by dividing the articles into the most minute portions, and all are covered with red cloth ; every thing must also be exposed to the view of the receiver, wild bulls and unruly he-goats, as large as donkeys, are dragged into the sitting apartment to the imminent danger and pollution of all around. Cocks and hens, loaves of half-baked bread, and pots of rancid butter, must be all closely investigated and personally approved of, and any deviation from this rule is certain to be visited with the most dire displeasure.

106. An easy and ingenious method of extortion exists in full force throughout the land, and all classes are equally amenable to its abuses

and privileges. Bringing any article whatever, the begging petitioner hands it over to his superior as a "*mamalecha*" or memento, for whatever he has the assurance to demand. Servants bring a stick or a bunch of grass, and ask for swords, clothes, and money; and chiefs and officers of the state present to His Majesty a pot of honey or a cotton cloth, and demand a horse or a mule, or an embroidered garment. If the *mamalecha* be received, the modest request must be acceded to, and indeed the custom of the country imperatively requires that the extortion should be invariably complied with.

107. With the first dawn, bands of petitioners station themselves on the top of the eminences adjacent to the palace, and the cry of "*aliet*," "*aliet*," "master," resounds deep in the still air of the morning; the door-keepers order them to draw nigh, but well aware of the understanding between these servants and the "four chairs," against whose decision they are appealing, they give no heed to the summons, but lift up their voices the louder, until the king orders one of his pages to cause the whole to assemble in the court-yard. At home and abroad, on excursions and military expeditions, the cry of "*aliet*" salutes the royal ear from the most strange and unexpected situations, and is in general, promptly attended to; the stick, however, is sometimes applied to the most importunate, who will not remain content with the promise of a future consideration of their claims, but every available opportunity is taken by the king of listening to these endless petitions and appeals. The halting stones on the green turf are frequently transferred into seats of justice, judgment is given whilst ambling over the fields on private excursions, and three-quarters of the entire day, with the exception of the Sabbath, is devoted to unravelling the knotty points of controversy, or settling the disputes and quarrels of his subjects.

108. In Shoa, the men have the entire responsibility in all the bargains regarding cattle and sheep, farming and warlike implements; and the women barter in the minor articles of sustenance, grain and pepper, salt, ghee and earthenware. And although the man cannot carry the water or bake bread, he must wash the foul linen belonging to both sexes, an operation which is performed in the running stream, the clothes being deposited in a skin together with the seeds of the *indote*, and well trampled under foot. It is the province of the men to plough, sow and reap, split the wood, cut the grass, and repair the house;

whilst to the women all the other heavy work is accorded, as fetching wood, water and grass, making butter and bread, spinning, pounding and grinding. Markets are held once a week in various parts of the kingdom, and the weekly supply for household use is then laid in. Men and women indiscriminately attend, each occupied by their own peculiar duties; at other times in all the towns and villages of Abyssinia, there being neither open shop or bazar, the Owenian system of barter entirely prevails, and the proprietor of any article who wishes an exchange perambulates the streets, calling aloud from door to door the nature of his goods, until he finds some individual willing to make the desired barter.

109. Love rules neither camp nor grove in Abyssinia, but base sensuality is indulged in by the grossest indiscriminate intercourse. A permanent female is sought for as a household drudge, the child is delivered over into bondage without any reference to her own wishes, and remains with her mate only until she can better her miserable condition elsewhere.

Women of rank, however, and more especially those of royal blood, assume high grounds and pretensions, for the honor has been conferred by linking with the lot of the subject; the reins of authority are generally taken violent possession of, the order and the command issue in the name of the lady, and the hen-pecked husband on whom the alliance has been thrust, is obliged in his own establishment, to endure in peace all the despotism of the palace.

110. In all matters of quarrel and dissension, should either of the parties desire to be reconciled, the matter cannot be adjusted without the intervention of a mediator; a third individual is sought for, who will undertake the arrangement, and in his hands the affair is entirely placed. The king himself often accepts the office, and of course is rarely unsuccessful in his applications. Inferiors come into the presence of their offended masters with large stones upon their heads, and prostrate themselves upon the earth in token of their fault, which, however, is generally forgiven on the intercession of the mediator. Quarrels between man and wife, if not allayed with the cudgel, or of that serious nature to cause separation, are settled by arbitration; the neighbours assemble to discuss the matter, a judge is instituted for the occasion, the parties are mutually examined, and a fine is imposed according to the

merits of the case : a string of beads, if the husband be in fault, and a pair of new breeches should the lady be found napping. A woman supposed to be unfaithful to the conjugal, "*alga*," may be returned to her friends with a portion of her property, but one caught in the act of infidelity can be well beaten, and ejected stark naked from the house ; these extremities are seldom indulged in, and mutual forbearance seems to reign paramount in Shoa.

111. But this universal loose style of living exercises a most baneful influence on society in general ; the mind becomes degraded, whilst the body is enervated by disease and indulgence ; jealousy is rife in every house, and the children of each separate female on the establishment are bandied against each other in all hatred and animosity, which is by no means allayed on the death of the parent, or by the posthumous intimation of his partial and unfair distribution of property.

112. On all occasions of rejoicing and ceremony, whether on the successful return of the king or of a private individual, on the sight of a procession or on the discharge of fire arms, the women with their characteristic love of noise, burst out into the most thrilling clamour of welcome. Moving their tongue with more than ordinary volubility against the roof of the mouth, they produce continuous successions of shrill notes, which are more agreeable to the listener than to the performer. One watchful dame on the outskirts perceives the approaching cavalcade, and forthwith gives out the clamorous note of warning ; in a moment the entire mountain side is covered with every female in the location, yelling in full chorus ; the *hillil—lil* progresses fast and furious, as they bend their bodies nearly double to assist in up-raising the melody of the tone, the tears stream from their eyes in the violence of the exertion, and the hills resound far and near with the gathered volume of the shrill notes.

113. One of the strangest of Shoan customs is the method of salutation ; the most earnest enquiries being invariably made regarding your own health and that of your house, horse and children, as if the enquiring party was really interested in the result. Even two old women tottering on the very brink of the grave, and afflicted with every pain and sorrow under the sun, meeting in the street, pull up and commence a string of good wishes, which are reiterated as long as the breath will come out of their old bodies. How are you ? How have you passed

your time ? Are you well ? Are you very well ? Are you perfectly well together with a thousand other pert interrogatives to be made acquainted with their private condition, and at each response the Deity must be invoked as to the great happiness and perfect felicity which have been experienced since last sight. Should the meeting take place twenty times a day the same ceremony is enforced, and for each progressive state of morning, noon and eve, there exists a distinct set of phrases, which from their continual repetition sound grating upon the senses. Passengers stand in the streets and roar out salutations intended for the inmates and huts a hundred yards from the hedge. You are startled from your sleep by a dunning—How are you ? from some gentleman passing before day dawn to his country residence, and your ears are afflicted from morning sun till evening, by a most teasing and harassing string of enquiry, from every one who passes himself off as an acquaintance.

114. The *buldurba*, or introducer, is appointed from amongst the retinue of every one who keeps an establishment, on the first introduction of the parties. To him, and to him alone can the visitor look for admittance into the house, and unless he is present, the monarch and the great man are alike invisible. Court-yards may be thronged with many attendants, and doors may seem invitingly accessible ; but the “open sesame” is wanting, and the stranger returns to his own abode disgusted with the insolence as well as inconvenience of the custom. Time, however, softens down the rigidity of the practice, which is at first so pertinaciously observed ; suspicion of evil intention gives way, on better acquaintance of character, and after a certain probation. There is much more difficulty experienced in gaining admittance into the lordly Abyssinian hut than into the lordly halls of an English nobleman.

115. Suspicion may also be easily traced in the custom of all great people moving from their domiciles with a long train of armed attendants, as in the height of Highland anarchy. The tail of the McGregor was seldom of longer dimensions than that of an Abyssinian nobleman. Indeed he is never allowed to be by himself, whether in the cabinet or in the field he is invariably surrounded by a numerous band of mean sycophantish attendants. The custom of the country enjoins the practice, the cheap price of provisions enables him to feed a large population and the lack of all manufactories, supply an unlimited number of idlers, who are willing to obtain a livelihood in any manner whatever. But the

nuisance is a crying one to the stranger. No privacy is ever enjoyed. No retirement is ever suffered. A dozen naked savages are continually by your side, restrained by no very correct ideas of order or discipline; the confused hum and suppressed chattering are by no means of assistance in study or writing, and on the occurrence of meals or of the visits of illustrious people, the whole establishment tumble in naked to the waist to satisfy their own inordinate curiosity, and to do honor to their lord and master.

116. Visits are generally made early in the morning or before noon, and it is reckoned discreditable to enter a strange house after meals, as the object of the untimely advent can only be attributed to a desire of obtaining the food and refreshment of which the etiquette of the country enforces presentation. Sneezing is accompanied by an invocation to the Trinity, and the bye-standers are expected to exclaim "*moroo*," God bless you, and eating is invariably attended by a loud smacking of the lips, which can be heard at some considerable distance from the entertainment; none but beggars eat their food in a quiet and rational manner.

117. There is no sense of decorum evinced in the satisfying of any desire, however gross, and no shame whatever is felt in exposure to the gaze of the public. The toilet is unscrupulously performed in front of the assembled multitude, and his Majesty himself, the most polished gentleman in the kingdom, blows his nose with his fingers, and wipes the soiled hand upon the robe of the nearest courtiers, who eagerly proffer the cloth for his acceptance. More offensive than the Amaponda, who carries his own little cleansing spade tied round his neck, the first object is seized by an Abyssinian upon entering a strange house, and ears and nostrils are scraped out with the most savage indifference to appearance. All sleep stark naked, stretched upon bullock's hides, huddled close together for mutual warmth, each loving batch being covered with the accumulated pile of individual garment. Should the master of the house require food during the night, a piece of raw meat and a horn of beer are brought to him by a male or female attendant, who, destitute alike of clothes and decorum, stands unconscious of all shame until the craving of his hunger be satisfied; and owing to their foul feeding and their more uncleanly habit of never washing, cutaneous eruptions spread like a plague over their unsavoury persons, and few indeed are free from the disgusting diseases of the beggar.

118. Their amusements are few indeed. At rare intervals, shooting vultures and monkeys in the woods, or running down partridges among the hills with their dogs, throwing the spear on foot at a mark, or mimicking the art of war on horseback, moving in the uncouth dance, or singing the war-song in chorus, whilst the games of *gibbeta* and *shuntridge*, and the annual throwing the ball at Christmas, fill up the scanty list.

119. The spear is generally launched at a short distance, and the unsuccessful competitors are obliged to lay down with their faces upon the earth, whilst all the better marksmen trample and triumph over their prostrate necks; and in the "*yombeza*," the mounted warriors with blunt lances choose a spacious plain and perform at speed all their evolutions of war, attacking and defending, throwing the reed and receiving upon the shield, and whooping and yelling to proclaim the victory, the delivery of a sure spear thrust, or the hemming among their own number, one of the opposite band.

120. The "*gibbeta*" is a game somewhat resembling back gammon, but is played with sixty pewter balls, which are stored in 20 holes over the board; the distribution of these balls and the judicious heaping up of the stones according to certain complicated rules, constitute the science of the game, which is, however, sufficiently intricate to foster a spirit of betting and gambling, which reigns in full force amongst the nation.

121. *Shuntridge* is nearly the Arab game of chess, but the board and the men are very miserable productions of genius; a few of the moves are somewhat different, and the game is almost entirely confined to the court eunuchs, who bask their portly forms in the verandahs of the palace, and pass away their idle hours in very indifferent play.

122. On the Christmas, an annual contest takes place between the king's household followers, the dependents of the purveyor general, and the Deck Agavari. A cloth ball is struck with a mallet, and a struggle ensues for the possession of the missile; three times the ball is discharged over the plain, and the party are declared victors who have thrice caught it in succession. They enjoy the privilege for the day of abusing the vanquished, the king only excepted; every tongue being unloosed and the foulest abuse and slander being heaped upon the most illustrious as well as the holiest personages of the court. The day is

concluded by a grand entertainment to all, at the cost of the chiefs of the defeated party.

123. The king's band is composed of simple reeds of various length and sizes, the "*imbeta*," having in the upper part an aperture over which the mouth is placed, and the "*mihut*," which is fashioned somewhat after the form of a trumpet or trombone. Each performer has but one pipe, and consequently like the Russian, is master of but one note; there is no particular air or time attended to, each giving out his breathing very much as he chooses; but the wild music falls soft upon the ear like the harmonious sound of the Panden pipe blown over by the breeze.

124. The Abyssinian fiddle, the "*musuncho*," is of rude form and fashion; an empty gourd or a hollow square of wood being carved with a piece of parchment as a sounding board, and a bit of rough stick inserted in one corner to serve as the neck; there is but one string, and as the performer is not a Paganini, the inharmonious sounds proceed from the instrument as if the unhappy spirit of music was confined in the interior, and uttered harsh screams and moans as the bow proceeded to inflict fresh tortures upon her agonized sinews. Some continue to perpetrate a very faint resemblance to tune; but all consider themselves at perfect liberty to scrape away in the most persevering and soul-sorrowing fashion, and unlucky indeed is the site of residence if stationed near the proprietor of a *musuncho*.

125. The harp, called "*buggana*," is a most strange fabrication of wood, leather, and sheep's entrails, and presents an appearance as if an old leathern portmanteau had been taken by children as a foundation, and built up with the rudest materials to represent the lyre in the days of Tubal; nor do the notes belie the first appearance of the instrument, or bestow any credit whatever on the fashion. It has five strings, and is used only as an accompaniment to the voice, a simple monotonous cadence of the individual notes being the only music produced.

126. The large drum, called "*kubbers*," and the small one "*nagga-rect*," are not thumped so continually as might be expected, they are exclusively reserved for military expeditions, or for doing honor to the happy return of friends and relations from successful journeys, and it is indeed lucky for foreigners, that the nation with their present set of crude instruments is not infected with a musical mania. The silence of

night is seldom disturbed by the discordant sound of their barbarous attempts.

127. A portion of the vocal music is of a more pleasing description, and some of the airs which the women croon over their work are even soft and plaintive, There is, however, no great change of note in the strain, which has generally reference to the particular operation in which they are employed.

128. The recitative of the war songs is pitched in a high key, and chaunted by a single individual at the top of his pipe; and the thundering chorus, which consists of a few words in deep base, is at intervals poured from every throat in the party, with great effect. The return of a successful army is indeed a most striking pageant; the glitter of the silver ornaments, the flashing of gay cloths and housings, and the shrill chaunt of the fight, closely followed by the pealing bass of triumph echoing from ten thousand merciless throats, forming altogether the very embodying of savage exultation.

129. Their church music is most execrable; although seven long years are passed in its acquisition, and the constant practice of many hours during the day ought to make them somewhat more perfect. Howling and screaming, however, are the most appropriate terms to be employed for this ceremony, and the hoarse cracked voice of the priest, increasing in fury as he progresses in his task, is in true keeping with the jingle of the "*itsnassil*,"* the Abyssinian timbrel, which in its startling effect, can be compared to nought but the rattle of the poker upon the tongs.

130. From four in the morning until nine of the Sabbath, this clatter and ranting is continued for the *honor* of their religion in all the churches of the kingdom, besides a full muster of their croaking choristers on all their numerous holidays and festivals; and the band of stout priests who nightly mount guard to preserve His Majesty by their song from the influence of evil demons, have certainly chosen a cunning path to prevent the advent of, at least, all those spirits who are gifted with any musical taste.

* This is the "sistrum" which is thought to be included under the Hebrew term "Tzitzalem," and is composed of a frame of sonorous metal crossed by bars of the same; these bars move freely in the holes through which they are passed, and when the instrument is shaken, the reverted ends striking upon the frame produce the clattering sound.

131. The attending dance of the priesthood is any thing but a relief to the picture ; the most uncouth attitudes and the most ungraceful positions are selected, whilst the beard and the crutch and the aged face are but in ill keeping with the mountebank jumps and capers performed upon the occasion. During the merry-makings in the palace and in the houses of the chiefs, the dance is also not distinguished by any less ludicrous effects, the votary seemingly enacting the part of a gander justly infuriated at the discordant sound of the music, shaking his wings and hissing in contempt of the fiddler's art, whilst he shuffles about in a crouching position, and makes sundry furious rushings and startings to possess himself of the obnoxious instrument.

132. The language of savages is generally highly metaphorical, and they are not satisfied unless action be embodied to the eye by color and character and form brought more vividly to the mind by the assistance of allegory, but this nation is equally unsuccessful in the personification of the spiritual, as in the abstract language of Theology.

The king and his chief singer form the only exceptions, the court language being sparingly sprinkled with a few flowery speeches, and the singer sometimes breaking out into crude allegorical sentences. " Why should the Father of song be restrained from dancing before the fathers of gold," he exclaimed when capering before the embassy on the steps of the palace, and the saying was responded to with shouts from the populace ; but the topics of discourse are always scanty among an uneducated race, and after the daily salutations are performed, nothing can be more rapidly stupid than the succeeding conversations of the native of Shoa.

133. Few but the priests and *deptras* can read or write, and many among those learned scribes are more indebted to the memory of their early youth, than to the page held in their hands for the forthcoming rant.

134. The ancient Ethiopic, which is also called Gees, remained the language of the empire only until the 14th century of our era, and in this idiom are written all the annals of her religion. It has now, however, fallen into disuse, and the people of Tigri alone retain one of its dialects. Amhara is generally spoken throughout the country.

135. The stores of literature being thus bound up in a dead letter, mistakes and false readings cannot be discovered in the low mumble of the officiating priest by the bystanders, who are alike ignorant of the text and the language; nor is the course of study of that extended or liberal nature to enlarge the mind of the neophyte. To know the Psalms of David by rote, together with the miracles of the Virgin Mary and Saint Tsela Huimandt, to elevate the voice into howling song, and to cut a caper into the air two feet above the surface of the earth, forming the envied accomplishments of the man of education.

136. Parchment is said to have been invented at Pergamos when the Egyptian monarch prohibited the exportation of papyrus. The Jews very early availed themselves of the Charta Pergamora to write their scriptures upon: the roll is still used in their synagogues, and was introduced into Abyssinia on the Hebrew emigration, where it still continues the only material in the country; but all the books extant are composed of many small leaves fastened one upon the other, enclosed between wooden boards, and carefully deposited in leathern sacks; many are embellished with glaring colored daubs, and all are looked upon with the eye of superstitious credulity.

137. The epistolary correspondence* is exceedingly laconic; the letters are folded up into small rolls, varying in size from one inch to four, and always enclosed in a coating of wax; there is neither signature nor superscription. The king possesses a signet seal, which is however seldom applied, as the names of all parties are introduced into the body of the note.

138. The pen is the reed, *kulum* of the East, without the slit, and the inkstand is the sharp end of a cow's horn, which is stuck in the ground as the scribe squats to his work; the ink is a foreign importation from the Somauli coast, and remains an intense black for ages, and the writer when he wishes to replenish his horn, inserts a few particles from his pocket, and adding a little liquid, produces a consistency similar in thickness to that used in printing.

* May this letter of queen Bezabesh come to my friend the English Ambassador.

Are you well? Are you quite well? Are you perfectly well?

That the soap may not end speedily, you will send it in large quantities, saith Bezabesh.

139. But the Abyssinian scribes do not hold the pen of a ready writer, and the dilatory management of their awkward instrument is attended with gestures and attitudes most distressingly ludicrous, clutching the tiny style like a hot apple in the paws of a hungry ape. It is carried with the most convulsive twitches, and seemingly by some supernatural force to the mouth of the writer, where the end is seized between the teeth and masticated, in a sort of mental phrenzy. During the whole period of this strange operation, the thin strip of dirty vellum is held at arms-length and viewed askance from every side, with looks of utter horror and dismay, and when at last the stick descends to dig its furrow upon the parchment, no terrified school-boy with the birch of the master hanging over his devoted head, ever took such pains in pointing the most elaborate pot-hook, as does the Abyssinian scribe in daubing his strange characters upon the scroll.

140. Like the Chinaman, each individual letter must be looked at from every point of view, before progressing to the next; every word must be read again and again by the delighted artist, and the greasy skin must be many times turned upside down by the grinning penman proud of his talents, to observe the happy effect of his handy-work.

141. During the intervals of approval, the destructive bites continue fast and fierce, to the utter demolition of the pencil; and long before the termination of the first sentence, European patience is apt to become utterly exhausted at the scene of awkward, foolish stupidity, and gross waste of valuable time. Seventeen years have been employed in transcribing a single manuscript, and a common epistle of five lines is the utmost extent of one entire day's exertion.

142. The following list gives the names of all the books at present in existence in Abyssinia. Tradition, however, records the titles of other works, which were deposited for safety in the islands in the Lake Zoo-ai, on the great invasion of Gragno, and which are said to exist with many other precious treasures of Ethiopia even unto this day.

1. All parts of the Old Testament, excepting the Pentateuch and the Books of the Maccabees.
2. The four Gospels with readings.
3. Chrysostom. Biography and Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews.
4. A dogmatical work of Cyril.

5. Genset. A book used in funeral solemnities, and ascribed to Athanasius.
6. Tethonegest. The code of Laws, said to have fallen from heaven.
7. Aclements.
8. Retuattaunanot. The Orthodox Faith.
9. Siena Aibud. History of the Jews in connection with the History of other ancient nations.
10. Mazopu. Extract from Ancient Philosophy.
11. Hēnosh. The Prophecies of Henosh.
12. Gadela Nudual. History of St. Michael.
13. Gadela zida Heimanot. Life of the Tecla Heimanot, the Saint.
14. Gadola Siena Markoo. Life of another Saint.
15. Gadela Gintra Maafao Kedus St. Zl.
16. Gadela Lalsbala. Life of a former emperor of Ethiopia.
17. Masgaba Haimanot. A dogmatical work.
18. Synodos. Canons of the Church, attributed to the Apostles.
19. Antiacos. Colloquy between Athanasius and a Nobleman called Antiakos.
20. Mazafa Mister. The principles of several Heretics of old.
21. Mazafa Dora.
22. Mazafa Timkal. Used in Christening.
23. Mazafa Actil. Used in blessing a Marriage.
24. Mazafa Keder. Used for instructing Renegades.
25. Gusbra Haimanot. Read during Passion Week.
26. Bartos.
27. Dionasios.
28. Teena Tetrak (Amharic.) Explanation of the Creation.
29. Tamera a Miriam. Miracles of the Holy Virgin.
30. Magara Miriam, Words of ditto ditto.
31. Godela Hawarjat. Lives of the Apostles,
32. Ardeet. Words said to have been spoken by Christ before his Ascension.
33. Kedasie. Liturgy of the Abyssinian Church.
34. Wuddassie Miriam. Praise to the Holy Virgin.
35. Arganon.
36. Gadela Samactal. Lives of the Martyrs.
37. Abushukur. Abyssinian Almanac.

38. Gadela Adam. History of Adam.
39. Kidan.
40. Egsiabher Neges.
41. Anda Negest. Book for Prognostication : forbidden in Shoa.
42. Sadela Medhanalim. Life of the Saviour.
43. Amida Mister (Amharic.) The Principal Doctrines of the Christian Church.
44. Temhest. Extracts.
45. Kufalik. Words spoken to Moses on Mount Sinai.
46. Mazafa Gragore (Amharic.) History of the invader Gragno.
47. Serata Breta. Christian Institutions of the Christian Church.
48. Mewaset. Hymns on Mournful occasions.
49. Zema Degna. Hymns sung during Fast times.
50. Degna, Hymns sung on other occasions.
51. Lifafa Zedik. A Book of absurd Contests, much esteemed, and buried along with the Corpse.
52. Ekabari. Book of Prayers.
53. Zelota Musa. Prayers of Moses against the influence of Evil Spirits.
54. Melka Michael. Prayers to St. Michael.
55. Melka Ijesus. Prayers to Jesus and the Holy Virgin.
56. Gadela Araga. Life of an Abyssinian Saint.
57. Gadela Kyros. Ditto ditto
58. Gadela Johani. Ditto ditto
59. Kotat of the 318 Fathers.
60. Maala Saalat. Prayers and Hymns for different hours of the day.
61. Wuddassie Amlac. Praise of God.
62. Mazafa Tornal. A letter which Christ is said to have written.
63. Surguamie Fidel (Amharic.)
64. Melka Gabriel. Prayers to St. Gabriel.
65. Swaso. Abyssinian Dictionary.
66. Germana. Prayers to frighten Evil Spirits.
67. Fans Manfasawi.
68. Dersana Sanbat. Life of a Saint.
69. Tekarie Ijesus. Christ's prophecy of the consummation of the World.

70. Mazafa Shekeneat.
71. Tecla Zeon.
72. Harmanot ab. Doctrines of the Abyssinian Church.
73. Gadela Antonino. Life of the Monk Antony.
74. Zelota Musadud. Prayers against Evil Spirits.
75. Dezsona Gabriel. History of St. Gabriel.
76. Gadela Georgio. Life of St. George.
77. Selota Monakosat. Prayers of the Monks.
78. Felekosus. Book of Monking.
79. Marishak. Book of Monkeny.
80. Aragawi Manfasawi. Ditto ditto.
81. Dersana Mahajawi. Life of the Life-giver.
82. Gadela Saunel.
83. Siena Aban.
84. Gebin Negest.
85. Geea Moie.
86. Epiphanius.
87. Aximarius.
88. Buni.
89. Synkesar.
90. Mazafa Berhanet.
91. Lowros.
92. Deduskalea.
93. Tamera Ijesus,
94. Ankoritos.
95. Mazafa Ishai.
96. Teliksiny.
97. Mistera Samai.
98. Georgis Waloea Amid.
99. Dersana Miriam.
100. Lik Evangel.
101. Taretech.
102. Gadela Ijob.
103. Thomas Koprianos.
104. Gadela Keduson.
105. Gadela Arsemaror.
106. Raia Miriam.

107. Gadela Abeb.

108. Gadela Makod Walale.

109. Gadela Guebru Christas.

110. Abicta Natrat.

143. Such is the accumulated literature of ages, and in the mass there are only four written in the language at present spoken and understood. His Majesty possesses a large assortment of manuscripts seldom referred to, and indeed with the exception of the Holy Scriptures, the remnant is but a tissue of absurd Church controversy, and lying monkish legends.

144. Thirty days constitute a month, to which five days and the fourth part of a day are added to complete the year; this interpolation is called "*quagmin*," and is introduced after the month of September, the 9th day of which, according to our style, commences the Abyssinian year. The year is also divided into four quarters, each being named after the Gospel, which ought to be at that season reading in the churches. From September to November, Luke gives name to the period; from December to February, John; from March till May, Matthew; and during the remaining months, Mark. Events are commonly referred to as having occurred during the days of Matthew, &c., but they have lost eight years in their computations of time, and our present Christian era of 1842, has only reached to 1833 of Abyssinian reckoning.*

145. Superstitious to a degree, the Abyssinian will undertake no expedition or serious journey without, in the first instance, receiving the desired omen of approbation from on high, and retracing their steps on various pretences, they remain in their houses for days until the welcome sign be witnessed. The sight of a hare is very bad indeed; an antelope springing across the road, good; a fox barking on the left hand, destroys all hope of a happy result; but on the right hand, a prosperous issue may be expected; but of all the numerous birds of ill fame, is the "*Goo-rasovula*." (?) Certain death or destruction, or the most dire disaster are certain to follow his croak, and there is no inhabitant in the kingdom, who has not some story to confirm the bad character of this evil bird. The fool-hardy wight, who giveth no heed to the warning note

* Giving the world an existence of 7334 years, they calculate that our Saviour was born in the year 5,500 after the Creation, and thus account for their deficiency.

being of a certainty either baulked in the object of his journey, robbed, maltreated, or murdered.

146. Savage man obtaining only through the medium of his own wishes and imagination a faint idea of the invisible and supreme Power, seeks for some tangible object of veneration and means of protection, and the Abyssinian, whose vague religious ideas afford him but small consolation in the hour of tribulation, and little reliance of security in the day of danger, reposes the utmost faith in the doctrine of charms, which present a substance stamped with a mystic and supernatural character, and capable of being attached to himself individually. The "*tulsim*," which is a worked zone studded with tiny leathern pockets, containing sacred charms enclosed in double and treble cases, encircles the waist of every man, woman and child in the kingdom; the arms and neck are also hung in a perfect panoply of amulets against the influence of every disease, whether experienced or anticipated; the written talismans of holy monks, mixed with the seed and leaves of potent witch plants, gathered by the hand of the forest recluse, afford a feeling of security which is not to be extracted from the leaves of the Gospel; and no one ever thinks of mounting his mule, without being well stored with these paper preservatives against the spear of the robber, or the sharp knife of the Galla.

147. On the first arrival of the Embassy on the frontier, the simple natives on their knees implored the gift of the anxiously desired charm against the charge of the dreaded lion, and the king himself, by no means free from the prevailing superstition, had in his possession two talismans, which till lately he considered of high dread and import; they were inscribed on parchment in the French language, one containing a portion of the Lord's Prayer, and the other the words, "May God open the eyes of Sabela Selassie to his errors."

148. Their superstitions are childish as they are numerous. They believe in the evil eye, in the existence of evil spirits who roam about the earth and waters, and in every description of omen, and the ignorance of many is passing strange, considering St. Michael to be God Almighty; the Virgin Mary the creatress of the world; and Sunday, to have been a saint of great sanctity, far superior to St. George or St. Michael, which has ensured for him one day in seven to be held holy to his name, whilst the others have their festivals only once during the month.

149. Eclipses of the sun or moon, as in other savage countries, afford an ample opportunity for the most abject superstition. They believe the orb to be dead, and that her demise prognosticates war, famine and pestilence. The whole town is in tumult and uproar, collecting together in the streets and churches, they cry aloud upon the Saviour of the world to take pity upon them, to screen them from the wrath of God, and to cover them with a veil of mercy for the sake of Mary, the mother of our Lord. The pagan Galla, who are present lifting up their voices, join in the petition, and from their not comprehending the Amhara tongue, render the most absurd construction on the prayer; the wailing continues during the whole period of obscuration, and when the orb again emerges, a universal shout of joy is raised, in the full belief that the prayers of the multitude have awakened her from the sleep of death. Any neglect on their part, of these accustomed exertions, is certain to be followed by some great public calamity, and the raining down of fire from heaven.

150. The "*beza*," or sacrifice for the sick, is considered lawful and efficacious, and is frequently resorted to; the animal which is meant as the type of the sick man is driven round the bed of the invalid amidst much noise and singing, and afterwards slaughtered outside the threshold, and at other times, an egg is turned three times towards the head of the patient, and then broken besides the bed.

151. Whilst no religion can be more corrupt than the nominal Christianity of this unhappy nation, which is a mass of absurdities borrowed from the Jew, the Moslem and the Pagan, nothing can be more humiliating than the superstition which it encourages. A thread of cotton yarn is stretched by the hired sorcerer during the night completely round the house, the extremities are fastened together by means of a link of iron, well imbued in blood, and the walls are freely sprinkled and bedaubed with gore, the day dawns upon the incantation which is supposed to be the work of the devil himself; and of the assembled multitude, who consider that some heavy calamity, if not instant death, would follow the act, there is not one individual sufficiently bold to remove the spell, and thus release the inmates from its withering effects. On one occasion, when the inhabitants of Ankobar were thrown into the greatest consternation by the dread appearance of the bloody finger, the Reverend Mr. Kraff tore away the charm, to the astonishment of all, without any fatal consequence to himself; but that very night the defeated sorcerer planned an attack

to rob his premises, which was only defeated by the extra vigilance preserved in consequence of having exposed the impostor.

152. No Amhara will venture to destroy a serpent save on Saturday and Sunday, when the sight of one of these reptiles is regarded as a favourable omen. In common with the heathen Galla, the Christians of Shoa make annual votive sacrifices in June to "*Sar*," the evil spirit, continuing the practice notwithstanding its being interdicted by royal proclamation under the penalty of forfeiture of property. Three men and a woman, who understand how to deal with the evil one having assembled at the place appointed, perform the ceremony in a newly swept house. The sacrifice consists of a ginger coloured hen, a red she-goat or a male Adaiel goat with a white collar; the blood of the victim having been mixed with grease and butter, is secretly placed during the night in a narrow street, when all who step or tread thereon, are supposed to receive the maladies of the invalid, who in return is restored to perfect health. The king perceived traces of this Pagan ceremony in the streets of Motatiel during a visit to that village some years ago, and tracing it to a wealthy individual who had caused the rite to be performed in order to free himself of syphilis, the honor of true religion was forthwith vindicated by a speedy transfer to the royal coffers of all the property of the dabbler in unholy rites.

153. The drum of the water kelpie is heard by the credulous native in the echo of every roaring waterfall, and the wretch drowning in the overflowing torrent is dragged under the rushing wave as the highly coveted food of the malicious spirit of the deep. Divers plants and herbs possess the most baneful properties and qualities, and a bunch of the Fegain grass, if skilfully cast upon the person of an obnoxious enemy, produces dire disease, sickness and death.

154. Sorcerers and necromancers attaining the respectable age of 4 and 500 years, exist in numbers in this land, flitting through the air and riding upon the wings of the wind at pleasure, and unbidden and invisible guests, eating the best and drinking the choicest liquors on the festive board.

155. "*Thavanan*," the great sorcerer of modern days, is looked upon with universal dread, and his last public act is still fresh in the memory of the present generation. He had for a long time indulged his palate, and enjoyed his place unseen at the king's own table, but being at

length informed against by one of his malicious fraternity, he was by means of a strong spell exposed in the fact, and ordered to instant death. "Grant me but my life," he exclaimed, "and I will explain to your Majesty this grand master-stroke of my powerful art." The curiosity of the monarch was excited, and a large vessel of water which had been requested was set before the magician. Placing his hand in the liquid, he addressed the king: "Oh descendant of the race of Solomon, the wit of thy illustrious father is dull in comparison with the wisdom of the meanest disciples of Arobal, I defy thy myrmidons and thyself," and cleaving the air as he uttered these words, instantaneously disappeared from the gaze of the astounded and crest-fallen court.

156. *Arobal Mammoo*, the king of the Genis, is supposed to reside in the depths of the large lake in Mans, called *Moofat Wuha*. In the bosom of its placid water his palace is placed, constructed of the usual fairy materials; coloured cloths abound in every apartment, and his drums are heard pealing from the centre of the lake, when famine, war or pestilence is about to visit the land. Any one desirous of studying the black art after destroying his *mahtab*, (the badge of Christianity,) and treating the emblem of faith with certain irreverences, proceeds into the depths of the waters, is met by the genius, and kindly instructed in the arts of magic and necromancy; after a lapse of time he resumes his blue silk cord and is suffered for a time to exercise his supernatural power upon earth, but his knowledge gradually decays, it cannot be resumed, and the sorcerer again sinks into the uninteresting character of an Abyssinian Christian, without even the usual conclusion of having lost his soul, or being in the end carried away in the talons of the foul fiend.

157. It is fully believed, that one of *Arobal's* disciples succeeded by the power of his medicines in transferring all Asfa Wassun's concubines to his own harem, and having been seized and remonstrated with on the gross impropriety of his conduct, he behaved in the most insolent manner, and referred the proceeding entirely to the high assistance of his friend, the genius of the lake. In his extremity, he was deserted by the spirit, and the *crim. con.* being fully established, he was put to death by order of the king, and the misguided ladies brought back in durance vile to the palace; but his character for subtle medicines was fully established, as one of the concubines shortly afterwards de-

prived the monarch of his eye-sight by means of a powerful spell, which had been imparted by her learned paramour.

158. But the enchanted village of "Daska Stephanas," hid from mortal gaze, and enclosing upon earth all the pleasures of paradise, forms the never-failing topic of all wonder-loving souls; the poetic fancy of Abyssinia has been utterly exhausted in depicting this rare scene of delight.

159. "Its sleep-soothing groves with lawns between, are situated on the Nile, where released from the loose shackles of all marriages whatever, beautiful females are plentiful as they are common. Potent liquors flow on in never-ending streams, and the earth yields her spontaneous fruits without care or labour. But shrouded in the magic mist, these Elysian fields open their portals only to mortals of commanding form and handsome feature, on whom the glance of favor has been cast by the fair inmates of the enchanted garden; human endeavour is of no avail to unriddle the mystery, and the dread art of the sorcerer and his most powerful talismans, are alike unavailing to unloose the spell for the benefit of any of those unfortunates on whom nature has bestowed a tortuous figure, or an ill-starred visage."

160. The blacksmith is also endowed with supernatural powers by the credulous Abyssinians, and is supposed to be able to transform himself at pleasure into the likeness of a wolf or hyena; the cunning practice being in common use amongst the craft of secretly encasing the whelp of one of these animals in a metal collar, which being retained in after life, strengthens in the eyes of the uninitiated the fabulous stories in circulation.

161. The presence of any Christian emblem, badge, or portion of the Holy Scripture is supposed to neutralize the handicraft of the dreaded artist. The metal cannot be wielded in sight of the cross, and will by no means assume the required design, should any scrap of the Bible be worn on the person of the bye-stander. Whilst fumbling with their imperfect instruments to transform a bar of iron into the necessary repair of one of the galloper guns, the small draft of air which proceeded from the tiny bellows, proved insufficient to heat the metal, and the native artists' smelters declared aloud, that the phenomenon was consequent on the presence of some holy charm. Badges and emblems, charms and amulets were incontinently stripped off by all; the labour

was renewed without any better effect, and the smiths stood aghast at the enchanted bar which would not become heated.

162. The large forge bellows of the Embassy was produced, and a sufficient blast being obtained, the assembly were ordered to don all their paper preservatives and stand round the anvil, the sparks now flew under the brawny arm of the European, and the job was forthwith completed, to the utter dismay of the Abyssinian magicians, who came privately to request, that no further public performance of the sort might henceforth take place, as their name and glory would entirely depart from the land.

163. Sickness and misfortune are attributed to the effects of the evil eye of the Bondak. Long consultations are held to discover the person whose sinister look has imparted the calamity, and when the suspicions have gradually settled into conviction, the most implacable hatred is ever afterwards entertained towards the dreaded personage, and although concealed under the guise of indifference, which the savage can so successfully assume, yet the opportunity of revenge is never lost sight of, and the sweet morsel is obtained in some underhand dealing of after-life. Dedjmateh Harloo, the father of the Dedjmateh-ou-lie, added much to his notoriety by the extermination of all the Bondaks he could lay hands upon. Superstition exulted in a reeking hecatomb of human victims, and the love and veneration of his subjects knew no bounds on his last summary act of collecting together, and roasting to death 1300 of these miserable wretches, who were supposed to possess the influence of the evil eye.

164. The Abyssinian contrives to fill up his craving stomach, and in general possesses a sufficiency of covering to preserve him, after his fashion, from the inclemency of the weather. The climate is indifferently good, and the earth yields her treasures without much fatigue or bodily exertion, but the food is not of the best description, the style of life and habitation most uncomfortable, and all combine to engender the seeds of disease and death, and to reduce the limit of existence to less than three score years and ten.

165. Elephantiasis is known in its most loathsome forms. Ophthalmia seems to be common, and syphilis is met with in some shape or other on every second individual. Leprosy is rife among the community, and the mountainous nature of the country renders the atmosphere sufficiently damp and cold for the location of rheumatism and catarrh;

altogether the inhabitants are decidedly open to all the ills to which flesh is certain heir in the most favored part of the globe, and they do not possess the more civilized means of alleviation.

166. Medicine is yet in its infancy, and charms and amulets, and sacrifices are resorted to, in the hour of sickness. The potent purgative, *cosso*, is applied to on almost every occasion, and its debilitating effects no doubt lead to shorten life. Paddling about in the mud with naked feet, and exposing the bare head to the sun, the blast and the tempest without any reference even to comfort, cannot prove conducive to health, and residing in frail fragile tenements amidst dirt and vermin, and surrounded by filth and putrefaction, must have the most injurious effect upon the constitution. The low regard with which all females are entertained, debars the enjoyment of conjugal affection. The want of education denies the profitable and pleasant employment of leisure time. Coarse fare is the general lot; little amusement or holiday vary the dull monotony of life, and bullied by the Church, the king, and the nobles, a short existence is passed in this world in no very great happiness or comfort, and the spirit passes away without any very distinct idea of what is to happen in the next.

167. Compared with the other nations in Africa, Abyssinia certainly holds a high station, superior in arts and agriculture, in law, religion and social condition to all the other benighted swarthy children of the sun, and the portion of good which does exist, may be justly ascribed to the remains of the wreck of Christianity, which although stranded upon a rocky shore, and buffeted by the storms of ages, still continues to contain a few precious gems amidst the overwhelming mass of sand and sea spume.

168. But the misery, the filth, and the moral degradation in which she vegetates, sinks her far below the level of any European nation, and the parent land remains obscured in the fogs of her original barbarity, whilst the morning sun of intelligence has in the mean time lightened upon the social existence of her remote colony:* nay she has even

* Customs rarely alter in a country so entirely isolated as Abyssinia, and where the influence of new ideas cannot lead to the perfection of the arts and sciences, and many of the present usages in the land would, in some measure prove what the Ethiopians affirmed in the time of Diodorus, that Egypt was originally one of her colonies; the very soil and earth being brought down from their plateaus by the flood of the Nile,

retrograded from her pristine state, and the great empire of Ethiopia has long since cracked and fallen to pieces. The shadow of a mighty name, the pagans have overrun her fairest provinces. The Christian chiefs of every district madly strive for superiority, and the great horrors of war are only averted by the imbecility of the national character. Still monks and priests and aged men are wantonly put to death. Houses and villages sacked and destroyed, and the stream of oppression rises hot and heavy from every quarter of this distracted country. The property, the liberty, and the reputation of the subject are entirely at the caprice of the ruler, domestic ties and affection are little known or understood; small comfort is enjoyed in the transactions of private life; the debasing effect of extended slavery holds firm footing upon the mind; superstition shrouds the land in her thick veil; and the day seems to be yet far distant, when she shall stretch out her hands to heaven, and be at peace with her Maker.

169. In arts, in industry, and in moral existence, Abyssinian Shoa remains indeed secluded in a dense cloud of darkness; her agriculture is the only redeeming feature, but the fertility of the soil is rather to be praised, than any great advances she has hitherto made in the science of husbandry.

170. Manufactures are restricted to the supply of the most simple wants: a coarse cotton cloth to cover nakedness, a skin of leather to serve as a bed, a mat basket to contain the most necessary food. The gold and silver ornaments are certainly made with some taste, but being solely for the benefit of one individual, cannot be thrown into the balance of the national account, and the little that is understood extraction of the metal from the earth evinces great imperfection of talent.

and there existing at that time a striking resemblance in many of the customs and laws of the two nations, each giving the title of Deity to their kings. The funerals in either country being performed with equal care and splendour; the writing in usage being the same in both countries; and the knowledge of the written character retained solely among those belonging to the priesthood. In both countries there are monasteries and religious colleges organized after a similar fashion, and those who are consecrated to the service of God, are supposed to practice the same rules of abstinence and sanctity; they are dressed alike, and have shaven heads, their kings wear the same description of robes and ornaments. The hair of the commoners is still dressed after the fashion depicted in the ancient Egyptian designs, and the use of sandals fabricated of leaves, which is recorded in ancient Egyptian story, is to this day extant in Abyssinia.

171. The difficulties and perils of the journey, and the unsettled state of the country, oblige to travel in caravans, and the slow tramp of the wearied mule, and the foot-sore slave, render commercial intercourse dilatory and of rare occurrence. Salt its still the great staple of importation, together with a few beads and coarse Arabian manufactures, and the return, which is made in grain, cloth and slaves. is certainly neither to the profit, nor to the increased enlightenment of the Abyssinian.

172. All the accommodations of life are simple and limited ; the houses are mere stakes badly plastered with earth, and afford little shelter from the elements, while the internal arrangements are equally rude and scanty.

173. The intellectual features present a peculiar deficiency. Few can read the character, and still fewer understand the meaning of the manuscript. The educated priests for the most part learn like the parrot, by rote, and rant at the top of their lungs, passages of which they know not the sense. The utter ignorance of the laity is truly deplorable : few can spell out a line during an hour's severe exertion, and none can write three words together. Their books are all of a sacred nature, and being written in an unknown language, are looked upon in the light of charms, specially if well bound and filled with pictures ; and although the kiss of debasing superstition be imprinted upon the colored daub, the intellectual vision remains unlit by the words of the text.

174. Poetry and painting are in their veriest infancy. Music has been ushered into existence a deformed monster ; and architecture still remains unbegotten in the dark abyss of Abyssinian ignorance.

175. In religion they are debased, superstitious, and bigotted, believing the most absurd and ridiculous doctrines, and resting their only hope of salvation on fasts and pilgrimage, on confession and priestly absolution.

176. In private life their character is equally despicable, and they have strangely contrived to accumulate all the vices of civilized as well as of savage life, and have succeeded in retaining but few of the virtuous traits of either. Nay, their very existence is the vegetation of a noxious weed in the foul kennel ; but the refinements of civilized society have not as yet supplied the beauties of original simplicity. The box of

Pandora has indeed been doubly locked after allowing all the scourges of mankind to escape with their full muster of attendants, and all the horrors of savage warfare, of merciless slavery, and of debasing despotism ride triumphant over the land.

177. Cowards, fanatics and liars ; cruel, superstitious and profligate ; proud of their deformities, and constant only in their inconstancy, they are bullies and beggars of the most transcendant character, whilst their dirty unclean habits render them a perfect nuisance to all with whom they come in contact ; glorying in the most savage, revolting and barbarous practices, which are hardly credible, except to eye-witnesses, their life is at complete variance with all the ordinary customs of other people. Brutalizing, like wild beasts on raw bloody flesh, when others have adopted the spit and the kitchen fire ; wearing no protection on the head and their feet, when all others having long since proclaimed the necessity of the covering ; exposing their naked persons as a sign of respect, contrary to every received law of shame, and existing in all the filth of unwashed persons and dark unswept hovels, they have indeed but little cause for the inordinate self-pride in which they hyperbolically style their petty location the finest of countries, and its unclean inhabitants, the only true Christians in the world.

History of the Abyssinian Church.—English Missions.

The departure of the Jesuit Patriarch was followed by a fierce persecution of all who were in any degree tainted by the abhorred faith of the Romans, and the last legacy of the western priest proved a fatal gift to the possessor. Suspected individuals wherever found were immediately put to death, and in accordance with the earnest entreaties of the population, and with the long established usage of Ethiopia, a new Abuna was appointed from Egypt, to preside over the ancient religion, now firmly re-established throughout the land.

But the failure of the ambitious designs of the Church of Rome had in Europe been entirely ascribed to the arrogance and cruelty of the emissaries employed, which had created so deep and lasting a hatred among the mass of the inhabitants ; and the milder order of French

Capuchins was accordingly put in requisition to bring about the desired re-union with the heretic church of Abyssinia. Six chosen men of the order, fully provided with the firmans of protection from the court of Constantinople, were first entrusted with the enterprize during the middle of the seventeenth century, of these four succeeded in penetrating into the country, but only to suffer the martyrdom of St. Stephen, and the remaining two, terrified at the fate of their unfortunate brethren, returned without hope of success to their monastery in France.

The zeal of the order nevertheless made one further effort in the cause, and again three doomed friars landed at Suakem, whence they despatched a letter to congratulate the Emperor on their safe arrival in his vicinity. Instead, however, of the anticipated presents, and means of conveyance to the court, an order for their execution was received by the governor of the town, and the stuffed heads of the fathers were forwarded for inspection, that the fair skin and the tonsure of the foreign priest might be fully recognized, and the promised reward be claimed by the inhospitable Pacha of the Coast.

Poucet's interesting descriptions still remain to commemorate a further quest which in 1700 was undertaken, in company with a member of the Society of Jesus; but the partner of his journey died in Nubia, and many doubts have been reasonably entertained regarding the truth of the physician's narrative. Matters are painted with more than travellers' license, and the imagination freely drawn upon for facts that never existed. The close of his career also served to throw a deep shade of disbelief over the minds of even the most credulous; for after receiving from the French monarch magnificent presents for the Emperor and Court of Abyssinia, he crossed the Red Sea, and penetrating into Persia, died at Ispahan, with the character of being a perfect impostor.

A last attempt was made a few years subsequently by Pope Clement XI, and four German Franciscans were despatched in the cause of Rome to the country of the intractable Abyssinian. The poverty of these missionaries, and the humility with which they refused all temporal wealth, touched the heart of the reigning emperor, and although he forbade them to preach in public, he pledged himself to protect their lives and promote the cause of their mission. "Your work is difficult," said the monarch, "it demands time, and you must be prudent, and not

arouse the prejudices of the people ; God did not create the world in one moment, but in six days."

Finding secret admission into the houses of many individuals, the Jesuits were beginning to gain ground, when the monks and clergy, who had suffered the most severely during the former struggle, raised an outcry, that the Europeans were the enemies of the Mother of God, and had blasphemed her holy name. The tumult became universal, and a powerful conspiracy was arranged to poison the friars, and dethrone the emperor. David, a young prince of the imperial family was called to the throne, and the unfortunate missionaries having been dragged from their place of concealment, were condemned to forfeit their lives.

On being offered a free pardon if they would abjure the Roman faith, the last martyrs to the cause indignantly rejected the proposal, and the young monarch struck with their devotion and endurance under severe and perilous trial, commanded that they might be banished from the land ; but the monks preferred stoning them to death, and the event accordingly took place in the year 1718.

So ended the ardent endeavours to substitute one superstition in the room of another. Time, and life, and means, had been wantonly expended, that the triumphant chariot of Rome might grind over the neck of the Abyssinian ; but the costly sacrifice was impotent, and the ambition of binding a far country in the fetters of spiritual slavery sunk deservedly to nought.

Another century rolled on before the Christians of the West bestirred themselves in the cause of enlightenment. The Apostolic Church had fallen from her high place, and it was reserved for the members of another faith to carry the glad tidings of salvation to the benighted people of Ethiopia.

The great traveller, Bruce, had now for ever broken the mysterious seal of ignorance which had hitherto bound the land as with an iron zone, and his Abyssinian friend and companion, the learned Abraham, after ten years of patient industry, had completed his pious labours. A translation of the Holy Scriptures was faithfully rendered into the popular language of the country, and the precious document was purchased in 1818, by the Bible Society of Great Britain.

The Reverend Messrs. Gobat and Kugler first penetrated into northern Abyssinia, and established their residence at Adowa, and the Reverend Messrs. Kraff and Isenberg, followed in the same path.

The words of the true Gospel were listened to by the natives with every attention, and amidst a scene of universal corruption, the pure lives of the preachers were beheld with amazement. But intrigue and foreign influence produced a revulsion in the mind of Aubie, the tyrant prince of Tigré, and the order for departure to the coast was enforced by the governor of the town, who was anxious to possess himself of property, that could not be removed from his avaricious grasp. Their names, nevertheless, remain in the land, and to this day the English missionaries are spoken of with the greatest reverence, as possessing every quality that was good, mild, and just.

Ardent zeal in the cause of Christianity again induced Messrs. Isenberg and Kraff to brave the dangers of an unexplored route through the fiery desert of the inhospitable Adaiel, and to endure the foul annoyance of a savage existence. The kingdom of Shoa now forms the theatre of their praiseworthy exertions. Dogmatical treatises have been ably penned in the vernacular language of the country; a school in the capital extends to the rising generation the means of improvement, and the example of a holy life will no doubt produce a happy effect.

But the uphill task of the missionary is indeed hard, and the wonder is, that any thing has been accomplished, and not that the harvest is scanty. Disliked as a stranger of envied accomplishments, despised as an alien to the land, and hated by the ignorant and bigotted priesthood, the words of truth fall unheeded from lips the most eloquent, and the most zealous endeavours prove of little avail. Perfectly satisfied with his own creed, the Abyssinian finds it easier to kiss the holy book than to peruse its contents, and to trust to the priestly absolution, instead of moulding his conduct according to the doctrines of pure faith. The rude artizan is esteemed of higher importance than the erudite Missionary, and blinded by the grossest superstition, engulfed in a sink of bestiality, and wedded to the manners, the customs, and the doctrines which are diametrically opposed to the evidences of the Gospel, it is not until the arts of civilized society shall have been introduced, and the neck of the self-sufficient Abyssinian bent under the superiority of the

stranger, that the barrier can be finally overcome, and one step be gained towards the restoration of the unhappy country of the true word of God.

The constitution of the church, the second great power of Shoa, is simple, and the sway over the public mind seems to be the effect rather of individual power than of a public body. Few lay men attend a chapel unless on the festival of their own saint; but all present offerings according to their means, and whilst few peruse the Holy Scriptures, every great man entertains in his house a priest in the capacity of father Confessor. In every clerical conclave, the king possesses the supreme voice of authority, and as from him proceeds, in a principal measure, not only the more temporal comforts of bread, beef and hydromel, but also punishments for real or fancied delinquency; the despotic monarch may here be justly regarded as the head of his own Church.

The Abuna or Archbishop is, however, the real spiritual chief of Ethiopia; consecrated by the Patriarch of Alexandria, and possessing with rich revenues, the intelligence of other lands: he is universally feared and respected throughout the empire, and all religious differences and dissensions must be carried for his final decision. Princes and rulers pay implicit deference to his high behest, and seated on the ground before his episcopal throne, receive, with the utmost respect, his every wish and advice.

Feuds and quarrels betwixt state and state are satisfactorily arranged in his presence, and war, tyranny, and violence are controlled by his commanding voice of mildness and benevolence. But the extent of his diocese is great, and many local difficulties oppose the pastoral visit to the extremities of his See.

The wild Galla, the bigot Moslem, and the pestilential morass, intervene in every direction, and the kingdom of Shoa, peculiarly insulated by these obstacles to access, has for ages been deprived of the advantages accruing from the residence of an Archbishop.

In the hands of the Abuna are vested the exclusive power of consecration. Bishops, priests, and deacons can from him alone receive holy office and function; and before assuming the clerical crook and cloak, the inhabitants of the most remote provinces must invariably repair to his court to undergo the requisite examination, and receive the indispensable blessing and authority. He only it is who grants ab-

solution for heavy offences against either God or man, and the ark of a church, whether newly constructed or polluted by the unhallowed touch of a Mahomedan, must be purified by his hands, with the holy *merom*, before being entitled to that high adoration which it thenceforward receives.

The second place in spiritual dignity is filled by the *Cheggrie*, the head of the monks, seated on the throne of Tekla Haimanot, one of the first founders of the orders of seclusion. He engrosses the management of all the various monastic establishments throughout the empire, and in his hand remains the charge of existing literature and education. Deeply versed in the subtleties of theology, his opinion is held of the highest import in the never-ceasing disputes upon the uninteresting subjects of false faith, which occupy the mind of the Abyssinian divine; but his authority extends only to the simple admittance into the monkish order, and to granting absolution for the minor offences of evil thought and prescribed fasts neglected.

The offices of the *Comus*, or Bishop, who ranks next above the common priest are few and simple. Without diocese or even authority over the inferior members of the Church, his peculiar function is to bless and purify the sacred ark, should it accidentally receive the impure touch of the deacon or layman, to repeat the prayer of admission, and sign the cross on the skull cap of the candidate for the monastic seclusion, and to afford absolution for trivial offences against the conscience.

Ignorant, bigotted, and licentious, the priesthood of Shoa are restrained under little rule or authority. The beauty of morality influences not their conduct, and punishable only by the king, or by their own brethren vice, excepting of the most flagrant nature, and resounding through the voice of an indignant people, is screened by the fellow-feeling of the sympathizing judges. Their number and cause might effect high power in the realm, but indolence and dissolute habits counteract the influence; and contented with the outward mark of respect from a besotted multitude, and enjoying a fair proportion of the good things of this world, they give little heed for the care of souls, either here or hereafter.

But in order to obtain the desired and enviable position of eating the bread of comparative idleness, a sacrifice is indispensable. The priest is restricted to the possession of one single wife, and on the demise or infidelity, no second marriage is authorized.

A small portion of labour must moreover be endured, the psalms of David must be carefully conned, and the mysteries of Abyssinian song and dance be fully penetrated before the sacred office can be obtained. The lessons of early youth are, however, soon forgotten, and the constant repetition of the same words, removes the necessity of retaining the character. Few in after-years can read, and still fewer respect the vow of celibacy; and the morning hours of the Sabbath and of the holidays, employed in dancing and shouting within the walls of the church, entitle the performer to all immunities, and comforts pertaining to holy orders.

Divine service within the precincts of the sacred edifice is limited to the delivery of a passage of the Gospel rendered into ancient Greek, a language long since dead throughout the land. Psalms are bawled at the extremity of stout lungs amidst capering and clashing of timbrels; the miracles of Saint Mary and of St. George are chaunted, and the worship is invariably concluded by an equitable division of the consecrated bread, which remains from the morning communion.

The rite of baptism is performed in an adjacent building, and the solemnization of matrimony is rarely resorted to in the land; but the death and the funeral feast are studiously attended, with much advantage to the temporal interests of the church. The choicest food is unsparingly dealt out to all, and the bereaved widow is glad to leave the management of her affairs to the assiduous father confessor. The dying man bestows a portion of his estate in this world for the bright hopes which absolution extends in that which is to come, and the holy sacrament is even administered after the soul has quitted the tenement of clay, in order that the superstition of grateful relatives may grant a rich reward for the blessing of the priest, and his undeniable assurance of exemption from the pains of punishment hereafter.

Deacons are usually chosen from among children of tender age, and on reaching maturity the life of the adult is not distinguished by the spotless purity of his duties in the office. The functions of these juvenile noviciates are light, it is theirs to be present during Divine service in the capacity of servitors and assistants, to complete the requisite number at the celebration of the holy communion, and to guard and preserve the sacred ark in case of accident by fire or water.

This mysterious casket is an object of all-engrossing adoration, and in its presence consists the only sanctity of the church. All prostrate

themselves to the ground, as the box, which resembles the Jewish ark, is carried in procession through the street, and when replaced in its case in the holy of holies the air is rent by the attendant priests with shouts in the temple of the eternal God.

Fasts, penances, and excommunications form the chief props of the clerical power; but the repentant sinner can always purchase a substitute to undergo the two former, and the law of the Church is readily averted by a timely offering. Spiritual offences are indeed of rare occurrence, for murder and sacrilege alone give umbrage to the easy conscience of the Abyssinian, and all other crimes written in the book of Christian commandment have been well nigh effaced from the surface of the tables. The nation is by no means religiously inclined, and the strict observance of weekly fasts, with suitable largesses to the priest and mendicant, are quite sufficient to ensure the requisite absolution for every sin committed in the flesh.

The churches are in general very miserable edifices of wattle and mud plaster, distinguished from the surrounding hovels by a thin coating of whitewash, which is dashed over the outside, to point with the finger of pride to the peculiar privilege of the two great powers in the land. Circular in form, the wretched thatch is surmounted by grasses glittering with brass and ostrich eggs, whilst the interior decorations are guided by the same depraved and heathenish taste.

Eight feet in breadth, the first compartment stretches after the fashion of a corridor, entirely around the building, and being strewed throughout with green rushes, forms the scene of morning worship. To the right of the entrance door is the seat of honor for priests and erudite scribes, and beyond this court, save on certain occasions, the bare foot of the unlearned layman cannot pass.

The uncleansed walls are festooned with ancient and dingy cobwebs, no inappropriate drapery to the wretched daubs which serve to cover the mud, and are designed to represent St. George and his green dragon, the patron saint of the church, the blessed virgin, and a truly incongruous assemblage of cherubims and fallen angels, with the evil one himself enveloped in hell's flames.

A dark inner compartment forms a last separation from the holy of holies which contains the sacred ark, and is completely shrouded from sight by the screens of glaring cotton cloth. Timbrels and crutches de-

pend in picturesque confusion from the bare rafters of the roof ; no ceiling protects the head from the descent of the lizard and spider ; and the *tout ensemble* of the Abyssinian church presents the strongest mixture of slattern finery and of squalid filth.

Certain revenues and estates are set apart for the support of each clerical establishment, and to ensure the proper distribution, an *Alaha*, or chief, is elected by the monarch from either class of society. Whilst a successful foray is followed by liberal donations from the throne, the safe return from a journey is acknowledged by an offering on the part of the private individual, and the shade of the venerable juniper trees which adorn the church yard, is ever crowded with groups of sleek hooded priests, who bask in the enjoyment of idle indulgence.

Loss of office is the great punishment inflicted by the spiritual court, which is composed of the assembled members of the individual church, and degradation is followed by the expulsion of the offending brother from the community. But the imperial hall of justice is no unfrequently graced with the presence of the refractory priest, and fetters in the dungeon, or banishment from the realm, maintain a wholesome fear of the royal power of investigation in matters ecclesiastical.

Monks swarm throughout the land, and the huts of the monasteries are always pleasantly situated in the depths of some shady forest around the church dedicated to the patron saint. Fields and revenues still remain in the possession of these orders, notwithstanding that the duties for which they were originally assigned, are now seldom performed. Education was in former days to be obtained alone from the inmate of the monastic abode ; and a life of scanty food, austerity, and severe fastings was embraced only by the more enthusiastic. But the skin cloak and the dirty head-dress now envelop the listless monk, who satisfied with a dreamy and indolent existence, basks during the day on the grassy banks of the sparkling rivulet, and prefers a bare sufficiency of coarse fare from the hand of royal charity, to the sweeter morsel earned by the sweat of his brow.

The monk is admitted to the order of his choice by any officiating priest. A prayer is repeated, the skull cap blessed with the sign of the cross, and the ceremony is complete. But a more imposing rite attends the oath of celibacy before the Abuna. Priests assemble in numbers

and fires are lighted around the person of the candidate. His loins are bound about with the leathern girdle of St. John, and the prayer and the requiem for the dead rise pealing from the circle. The Glaswa, a narrow strip of black cloth adorned with colored crosses, is then placed on the shaven crown and shrouded from view by the enveloping shawl, and the Archbishop, clad in his robes of state, having repeated the concluding prayer and blessing, signs with his own hand the emblem of faith over the various parts of the body.

But Abyssinia possesses no idea of the more salutary doctrines of Christianity. Polluted faith is here reflected in the mirror of her depraved manners; and long, severe fastings constitute the essence of her degenerate religion. The idol worship of saints has made rapid progress in the land, and the ignorance of her clergy is only to be equalled by the impurity of the lay classes. Their belief in Christianity, if that term can be applied, is strange, childish and inconsistent; and bigoted to the faith of their ancestors, they abhor and despise all who refuse to sign this, their absurd confession.

“ That God created all religions in the world and that each is perfect of its kind except that of the Shankala, but that separate places are prepared for each creed in Heaven.

“ That the Alexandrian faith is the only true belief.

“ That faith together with Baptism, are sufficient for justification, but that God demands alms and fasting, as amends for sin committed prior to the performance of the baptismal rite.

“ That unchristened children are not saved.

“ That the Baptism of water is the true regeneration.

“ That invocation ought to be made to the saints, because sinning mortals are unworthy to appear in the presence of God, and because if the saints be well loved, they will listen to all prayer.

“ That all sins are forgiven from the moment that the kiss of the pilgrim is imprinted on the stones of Jerusalem, and that kissing the hand of a priest, purifies the body from all sin.

“ That sins must be confessed to the priest, saints invoked, and full faith reposed in charms and amulets, more especially if written in an unknown tongue.

“ That prayers for the dead are necessary, and absolution indispensable; but that the souls of the departed do not immediately enter upon

a state of happiness, the period being in exact accordance with the alms and prayers that are expended upon earth."

All ideas regarding salvation are indeed vague and indefinite, and vain, foolish doctrines have taken entire possession of the shallow thoughts of the Abyssinian. Born in falsehood and deceit, cradled in bloodshed, and nursed in the arms of idleness and debauchery, the national character is truly painted in the confession of one of her degraded Sons: "Whosoever we behold the pleasing ware, we desire to steal it, and we are never in the company of a man whom we dislike, that we do not wish to kill him on the spot."

Throughout the land the basest superstition reigns triumphant. The kiss of adoration is imprinted on the external pillar of the Church, and men proceed on their way in perfect security of the protection of the patron saint. The unwilling female is driven to the Communion Table only as a test to suspected infidelity. The preservation of a fast, and absolution accorded by a licentious mortal, form the first grand principles of the religion of Shoa, and it would indeed prove a far easier task to sweep from off the face of the land, the present meretricious fabric, and to raise up a new temple in its stead, than to attempt the Herculean labour of cleansing, as it now stands, the impurities of this Augean stable.

(Signed) D. C. GRAHAM, *Captain,*
Principal Assistant to the Embassy.

Rites and Practices of the Abyssinian Church, which appear to have been adopted from the Jews.

A lengthened detail of all the absurd confusion of doctrines which prevails in the church of Shoa, would prove neither pleasant nor profitable to the reader, and may moreover be perused in the learned dissertations of the Jesuits; but those rites and practices which the Abyssinians appear to have adopted from the Jews, are well worthy of remark, and we here insert them as a sequel to fill up the blank in the foregoing sketch of the Church History.

It is a matter of high importance to separate the manners and customs which a nation has borrowed, from those that she has produced during the advance of time within her own pale; and from an adequate knowledge of her self-activity, some idea may be formed of the station to which Ethiopia may be admitted within the ranks of civilization; and of the expectations that may reasonably be entertained in how far her efforts could be rendered subservient towards the improvement of the moral and political state of benighted Africa.

Surrounded by many hostile tribes, and secluded from enlightened intercourse since the capture of the Upper Nubia by the Turks, and the possession of the Red Sea by their numerous fleets, Abyssinia has retained her customs with little alteration since the sixteenth century, although that slight modification may be observed, which is not uncommon in the general history of mankind. During the fresh cruelty of the successful invader, national rites and practices are maintained with more than wonted stedfastness; but when the first violent assault of enmity has yielded to a more quiet intercourse, a mutual interchange is admitted between the contending parties, and thus the Jew, the Moslem, and the Pagan have each in their turn contributed to the general stock of Ethiopia.

Many circumstances, however, have continued to render the Abyssinian nation peculiarly susceptible of Jewish ideas and influence; and the abilities of her learned historians have in vain been racked to devise the most becoming legend, by which to account for the introduction into the empire of such a multiplicity of Hebrews.

In accordance with endeavours of other nations to derive their ancestry from demi-gods and heroes, the kings of the country boast a direct descent from the house of Solomon, and flatter themselves in the name of the wisest man of antiquity.

The high sounding title of king of the Israelites is added to that of Emperor of Abyssinia, and the motto of the national standard floats on the breeze—"The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed."

"The Queen of Ethiopia" says the tradition, "whose name was Alaqueda, had heard from the Merchant Tamerin, of the wisdom and the glory of the son of Sirach, and resolving to visit him in his own country, she proceeded to the land of Israel, with all the rich presents that her empire could afford.

“After a season the royal body returned, and her son Menelech, the result of her visit to the greatest potentate of the age, was born, and in due time transmitted to his august sire. The young prince was duly instructed in all the mysteries of Jewish law and science, and being anointed king, under the name of David, he was returned to his own land of Ethiopia, escorted by a large suit of the nobles of Israel, and a band of her most learned elders, under the direction of Ascarias, the son of Tradok, the High Priest.

“The gates of the temple of Jerusalem were left unguarded, and the doors miraculously opened, in order that the holy ark and the tables of the Law might without difficulty be stolen and carried away. The journey was prosperously performed, and the Queen Mother, on resigning the reins of authority to her son, caused a solemn obligation to be sworn by all, that henceforward no female should hold sway in the land, and that none but the issue of David should sit upon the throne of Ethiopia.”

Although this tradition may in itself be considered inconsistent and improbable, the firm belief in the origin thus traced, will in a great measure account for the general inclination and consent to receive Jewish rites and practices, as they were in process of time presented.

The fable of Queen Maqueda was in all probability the invention of fugitive Jews, who after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus, emigrated to Ethiopia by way of the Red Sea, who disseminated the tradition with the design of obtaining the desired permission to settle in the country, and whose descendants, under the name of Falashas, are still extant among the mountains of Simien and Lasta.

The real queen of Sheba or Saba, known to the Arabs under the title of Belkis or Nicanta, reigned over a portion of Arabia Felix. Want of geographical information and inquiry perpetuated the error of antiquity, which extended Ethiopia to Arabia; and the Sabacans and Homerites, who inhabited the Southern portion of the land, are frequently confounded with the swarthier sons of Africa.

But the queen of the South, who came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, brought along with her the produce of her own country; and camels and spices, gold and precious stones, pertains not unto Ethiopia. The first Christian Missionary found the inhabitants of Abyssinia idolaters and worshippers of the great serpent Arwe; whereas, according to

tradition, the Jewish faith had been for ages established firmly in the empire.

No Hebrew literature remains to support the legend. The Holy Scriptures were not even translated into the language of the country. No connexion was in after-times maintained with the land of fellow-faith, neither was any assistance afforded in the day of her distress, when Israel suffered under the despoiling hand of the Abyssinian and the Babylonian, and bent her oppressed neck to the yoke of Egypt and of Rome.

The family of Menelech Ibnel Hakim are stated, in the *Kebra Negest*, the glory of the kings, to have possessed the throne in uninterrupted felicity until the year 960, when the massacre of the issue of Solomon was perpetrated by the woman Essat, and one solitary prince of the blood royal alone escaped to take refuge in the distant and loyal province of Shoa. During the succeeding four hundred years, it is asserted by the learned historians, that the usurping rulers of the fairer provinces of the empire were Jews, who exerted their utmost endeavours towards the propagation of their religious creed, and that when the legitimate dynasty was again restored under Ican Amlac, the Hebrew prejudices had taken too deep a root, to be easily eradicated from the mind.

But the names and histories of many of these usurpers still remain to confute the tale; and although in furtherance of political objects, privileges might have been granted to the numerous Jews residing in the country, it does not appear that the party ever gained sufficient preponderance to place one of their own faith upon the throne, and thus the origin of the existing rites must take a humbler flight to be in union with the truth.

Ignorance is indeed too glaring a feature in the character of the nation, and remains a monument of the first conspicuous fruit of her delight in the confusion of truth and falsehood; superstition required the consistence of fable, and learned doctors of the law became robbers of the temple. The conscience was not galled by the fabrication of ten thousand miracles, which stain the pages of her Church History, and the honor of Ethiopia triumphed in an origin, which was ascribed to base illegitimacy and intrigue.

The ancestors of those Jews who to the present day exist in Abyssinia, arrived long before the nation had embraced the Christian religion,

and in their attempts to obtain moral influence over their Pagan hosts, were far from being inactive in their adopted home. The early Christian church, that of Egypt especially, having embraced many Hebrew customs, was now introduced into a country, where similar doctrines and practices were already in use, and hence it arose, that the population so readily became converts.

In process of time the Jews increased in numbers, and a consequent augmentation of influence was obtained over the fickle mind of the Abyssinian. Christianity was wanting from the beginning, and their claim to the appellation of "*Habeshi*," a mixed and mixing people, was never more aptly exemplified than in the strange medley of religion which resulted in the confusion. A mixture from different nations—as stigmatized by the original term—they have garbled the faith of all their ancestors, and there is assuredly no Christian community in the whole world, which has jumbled together truth and falsehood with such utter inconsistency as the vain church of Abyssinia.

With the destruction of the race of Solomon, the Jewish party obtained the preponderance, because their assistance was indispensable to the usurper. Again, on the restoration of the legitimate dynasty, they were hunted among the mountains as a race accursed, and the feeling reigned paramount to sweep the wanderers from the face of the land. But the custom of ages had impressed the Hebrew practices too deeply to be removed. They were in fact regarded in the light of orthodox Christian doctrines, and as might have been expected from a wicked, bigotted, and superstitious people, the severest persecutions were enforced against the members of another creed, without the Abyssinians observing in how far they were themselves tainted with those very principles, which in others they considered so justifiable to oppress.

The same restrictions which prohibited the Jews from partaking of the flesh of certain animals pronounced unclean by the Mosaic law, still heavily binds the stubborn neck of the Ethiopian. The act which is deemed disgraceful in the eyes of men is in itself firmly believed to be a moral transgression, and is visited, as was the case in the Mosaic institution, by the stern reprimand of the priest. The penance of severe fasting, or of uneasy repose upon the bare ground is enforced by the father confessor, to efface the taint of the interdicted animal; and prayers must be repeated, and holy water piously be sprinkled

over the defiled person of that sinning individual, who shall have dared to touch the meat of the hare, or the swine, or the aquatic fowl.

“The children of Israel did not eat of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh.” This nerve is in the Amharic language termed “*Shoolada*,” and it is prohibited and held unlawful in Shoa, more especially to the members of the royal blood considered as highly unclean; it ranks with the carrion carcase, and the universal belief prevails, that the touch of the unholy morsel would infallibly be followed by the loss of the offending teeth, as a direct proof of the just indignation of Heaven.

The Abyssinian cannot be brought to admit, that every creature of the universe being alike the work of the Almighty, must necessarily be clean, and that those which are not noxious to health can therefore be used for man’s food, if accepted with thanksgiving towards the Creator. The liberal spirit of Christianity is indeed wonderfully clouded in darkness, and the stranger who professes its tenets, but withholds his subscription to the creed of narrow and fanatic ideas, is regarded as worse than the surrounding heathen, and condemned to eternal perdition.

The Jewish sabbath is moreover strictly observed throughout the kingdom. The ox and the ass are at rest; agricultural pursuits are suspended; household avocations must be laid aside; and the spirit of idleness reigns throughout the day.

Abolished by the orders of the great Council of Laodicea, the oriental churches were, after the observance of centuries, freed from this burden, and men gladly availed themselves of the ecclesiastical license to work on the Saturday. Here, however, the ancient usage agreed too well with the laziness of the people, systematically trained to indolence and sloth; and when a few years ago, one daring spirit presumed, in advance of the age, to burst the fetters of superstition, His Majesty the king of Shoa, stimulated by the advice of besotted monks, delegated his wardens throughout the land, and issued a proclamation, that whosoever disturbed the original dreary stillness of the Jewish sabbath, should forfeit his property to the imperial treasury, and his person to the State dungeon.

Ludoff, the celebrated Strabo of Ethiopia, most accurately remarks, that there is no nation upon earth which fasts so strictly as the Abyssinians, and that they would rather commit a great crime than touch food

on the day of abstinence. They not only boast, with the Pharisee, "I fast twice a week," but pride themselves also upon their mortification of the flesh during half the entire year; whilst the haughty and self-sufficient monk vaunts his meagre diet as the only means of expiation from sin and evil desire.

The Abyssinians, in common with other Christian communities who rigidly observe the fasts of Wednesday and Friday, advance as an argument, that the Jews seized our Saviour on the first of those days, and on the second carried into execution their design of crucifixion; but as this account differs from the evidence of the Gospel, which shews that the arrest took place upon Thursday, the observance is most probably an imitation of the weekly fasts in existence among the Jews.

The fast of the forty days before Easter is preserved with much greater rigour than any other in Abyssinia, and the reckless individual, who shall neglect the great *toma hodada*, cannot possess one sentiment of true religion in his heart. To the abstinence of this season especially are attached peculiar virtues, which completely nullify the effect of every sin that may be committed throughout the residue of the year.

According to the Jewish practice, all culinary utensils must thoroughly be cleansed and polished, to the end, that no particle of meat or prohibited food may remain to pollute the pious intention. Journeys and travels are strictly interdicted, and from Thursday until Easter moon, no morsel should enter the lip, and the parched throat ought to remain without moisture.

During the fast of the Holy Virgin, children of tender years are not even exempted from the penance of sixteen days; and during the many and weary weeks of abstinence which roll slowly throughout the entire year, the Abyssinian priest would grant no dispensation to the famished mortal, were he to receive an immediate mandate from heaven.

Sabela Selassie arose some years ago, a mighty zealot in the cause, and perceiving that the custom was beginning to decline, proclaimed, through the royal heralds, pains and penalties sufficiently severe to ensure the future strict observance of the fast. The commands of the defender of the Faith were however in one instance transgressed by a soldier during a military expedition; but his excuse of fatigue under a heavy load of the king's camp equipage was admitted; and although on similar occasions a certain license is extended, still the monarch pre-

serves a strict watch over the maintenance of church discipline, and delights to perceive the stranger imitating the hypocrisy of his own example.

All the absurd ideas of the Jewish Rabbins, regarding the dead, have been received and embraced by the fathers of Abyssinia. They maintain that the soul of the departed does not immediately enter into the kingdom of joy, but is conducted to an earthly paradise situated in an invisible spot between the heaven and the earth, where it remains until the resurrection in a state of happiness or torment, according to the alms and prayers bestowed by surviving relatives and friends. Niches in the same spot are also occupied by the saints, and the inconsistency of their faith fully appears in the belief, that the intercession of the Almighty is absolutely necessary of these very saints, who themselves require mortal mediation to be absolved from their spiritual imperfections, and to be suffered to rest in peace until the coming of Christ.

But the self-interest of the avaricious priest is wrapped up in the preservation of this doctrine. The clergy riot in the price of death-bed confession, and a corner of the church yard is sternly denied to all who die without the due performance of the rite, or whose relations refuse the fee and the funeral feast. The payment of half a crown, however, wafts the soul of a poor man to a place of rest; and the *tescar* or banquet for the dead, places him in a degree of happiness, according to the costliness of the entertainment. The price of eternal bliss is necessarily higher to the rich, but German crowns procure the attendance of venal priests, who absolve and pray continually day and night, and the reeking burial feast is frequently devoured in commemoration of the event. Royalty is taxed at a still more costly rate, and the anniversaries of the deaths of the six kings of Shoa are held with great ceremony in the capital. Once during every twelve months, before the commencement of a splendid feast, their souls are fully absolved from all sin, and the munificence of their illustrious descendant is still further displayed in the long line of beeves, which afterwards winds its way to the threshold of every church in Ankober.

The Talmud asserts, that those who die piously, remain in a state of active knowledge of all the occurrences of this world. Philo, the learned Jew of Alexandria, informs us, that the souls of the Patriarchs pray incessantly for the Jewish nation, and the erudite Rabbins believed

that angels are the governors of all sublunary things, and that a man in every country has a guardian angel for protection and direction. The Abyssinians carry this belief even further. They confidently anticipate the intercession of saints and angels in all spiritual and secular concerns. They invoke and adore them in even a higher degree than the Creator ; all their churches are dedicated to one in particular, and the holy ark is regarded as the visible representative of the respective patron. Without this *talot* the church is not Christian, and heretics alone doubt of its wonderful virtues and inherent power. Prayers and vows are offered to the box, and the kiss of adoration is held sufficient to bring down the desirable blessing. The ark of St. Michael accompanies all military expeditions to ensure success against the Galla, and that of Tekla Haimanot stands the palladium of the North, to preserve the empire from the attacks of the Mahomedan prince of Argobba.

Like the Pagans of ancient and modern times, who placed between the most High God and themselves a species of inferior deity, the Abyssinians observe this species of idolatry, although the names of their tutelar spirits have been changed. St. Michael and the Holy Virgin are here venerated as in no other country of the world ; the former as the martial leader of all the choirs of angels, the latter as chieftainess of all the saints, and queen of heaven and of earth. Both are considered as the great intercessors for mankind, and the prayer arises to their name, and the honor is ascribed to their memory, which belongeth only to the one Eternal.

The detrimental influence of this superstition is fully exemplified in the conduct of the nation. The mediator is ever employed when individual courage fails in impudent assurance or insatiable beggary. Time is uselessly wasted in importunity, which all believe must in the end prove successful, and the practice of invocation and intercession thus exerts the most baneful tendency even upon the daily dealing of life.

Like the Jews of old, the Abyssinians weep and lament on all occasions of death, and the shriek ascends to the sky, as if the soul could be again recalled from the world of spirits. The hired mourner of the Israelites raised the piteous wail. Here the friends and relatives of the departed assemble for the same purpose, and the absence of any from the scene is ascribed to want of love and affection. As with the Jews, the most inferior garments are employed as the weeds of woe, and the

skin, torn and scarified from the temples, proclaims the plunge into the last extremity of grief.

In later days, the extravagance of mourning has been somewhat moderated through the agency of a priest of the church of St. George, who stood boldly forward to arrest a practice equally at variance with the sacred books of the country, and with the spirit of the New Testament. Excommunication thundered her wrath upon all who should thenceforth indulge in the luxury of woe, and the people trembled under the ban of the Church. The death of a great governor soon confirmed the restriction. Loved and esteemed by all classes, the prohibition was severely felt. The complaint of lamentation was referred to the throne, and as the deceased was a man of rank and a royal favorite with all, the clergy were commanded to grant absolution in this one instance. But Zeddoo, the stout-hearted priest arose and declared, that he had no respect for persons, and the words of truth must be defended to the death. The silence of the monarch enforced the ecclesiastical fiat, and to this day the drum is mute at the funeral wake, and customary praise of the deceased is heard no more in the public resorts of the capital.

On the annual day of atonement, the Jews were obliged to confess their sins before a priest. In like manner, the Abyssinians are commanded from time to time to perform the ceremony during the great fast of *Hodada* more particularly, and on Good Friday, the day of the Jewish expiation; and as the slave in token of his freedom and dismissal received the blow from the Roman proctor, so the penitent on absolution, receives the stroke over the shoulders from the branch of the *woira* tree, as a sign of his deliverance from sin and Satan.

Murder and sacrilege ought to be immediately revealed to the officiating priest, and a particular confession of all crimes is enjoined once before death. The father-confessor is bound to the strictest secrecy, and it is believed, that on this point a dreadful oath is taken before ordination, when the mysteries of religion are explained by the *Abuna*, and especially those which have reference to the preparation of bread for the Holy Supper. In a small house styled Bethlehem, which rises immediately behind every church, the mysterious ceremony is performed. The deacon can alone bake the cake, and the most vigilant guard is invariably preserved against the approach or intrusion of females, or other improper visitors during the hours of solemn preparation.

The Jewish temple consisted of three distinct divisions ; the fore Court, the Holy, and the Holy of Holies. To the first, laymen were admitted, to the second only the priest, and to the third the High-priest alone. All entrance was denied to the Pagan, a custom which is still enforced in Abyssinia, and her churches are in a like manner divided into three parts.

“ Keunic Maalt” is the first enclosure to which all laymen have access, and wherein the priests and *defteras* perform Divine service by singing, dancing, and drumming. “ Mukdas” is the second, a corner of which is set apart for laymen during the administration of the Holy Supper, whilst a cloth screens the mysteries of the interior. Here also hang arranged around the walls, the bones of many deceased worthies which have been carefully gathered from the newly opened sepulchre, and are deposited by the hand of the priest in cotton bags. By the nearest relative the first opportunity is embraced of transporting these mouldering emblems of mortality to the sacred resting place of Debra Lebanos, where the living and the dead are alike blessed with a rich treasure of righteousness, since the remains of Tekla Haiman, the patron saint of Abyssinia, still throw over the scene of his miracles upon earth, a bright halo of holiness.

“ To Kuddist,” the Holy of Holies, none but priests are admitted. Behind its veil, the Sacrament is consecrated, and the tremendous mysteries of the ark are shrouded from the eyes of the uninitiated. Prayers, vows, and offerings are daily made to this idol sitting in the centre of the Abyssinian church, and the handiwork of some vain ecclesiastic is held up to the admiring multitude as the true ark of holiness, which secreted in a cave during the inroad of the conquering Graigne, has been discovered by a miraculous dream from heaven. Even unto this day the spoils of the temple of Jerusalem are supposed to remain a blessing to the land, and old and young, rich and poor, bow the knees as to the Omnipotent Creator, before a round wooden box which contains nought save the name of the patron saint of the Church.

But among the ignorant mass, the mystery is carefully preserved. The priest who dared open the lip to his countrymen regarding the contents of the casket, would suffer the heavy penalties due to sacrilege ; and although the gold of the foreigner has penetrated the secret of its interior, the dense fog of superstition will long obscure the

disgraceful idolatry from the confined understanding of the bigotted son of Shoa.

Like the Jews, the Abyssinians, although objecting to sculpture, ornament their churches with paintings, and kiss and pay the miserable daub every religious respect. The vow is offered as of old to the temple of Jerusalem, and oil and frankincense, shields and spears, cloths and money, are offered according to the worldly substance of the pious and superstitious donor.

The sweet singer of Israel danced and jumped before the Lord, and a vile caricature imitation remains the chief point of Abyssinian worship. Capering and beating the ground with their feet, whilst stretching their crutches towards each other with frantic gesticulations, the performers rather resemble lunatics than holy priests, and the clash of the timbrel, the sound of the drum, and the howling of harsh voices, complete a most strange form of devotion.

Like the Jews, the Abyssinians invariably commence the service with the Trisagion, and the morning lesson is performed with the same careless and irreverent demeanor for which the Hebrews were latterly blamed. The lessons are taken partly from the Scriptures, and partly from the miracles of the Holy Virgin, and of Tekla Haimanot, the life of St. George, and other foolish and fabulous works; but all are in the ancient Ethiopian language, which to the congregation is a dead letter; and the sole edification of a visit to the church is comprised in the kiss that is imprinted on the portal.

Pride, hypocrisy, and contempt of other nations are strangely at variance with the absurd imitations of customs and manners, which the Abyssinians have adopted from all. The Jews also hated the Heathen bitterly, styling them "dogs," and rejected of God: whilst notwithstanding their contempt and pride of holiness, they willingly received many of their superstitious practices. The Abyssinian will not eat with the Galla or the Mahomedan, lest he should thereby participate in the delusion of his creed; and the church and the church-yard are equally closed against all who commit this deadly sin. But the order of separation was applicable so long only as the knowledge of the one true God was restricted to a single nation; and the prominent principle of Christianity, that the light of the true faith should shine before all men, and be no longer concealed under a bushel, is here neither understood nor regarded.

The Abyssinians have also fully adopted the same spirit of merciless destruction, which impelled the Israelites to destroy their enemies from the face of the earth; considering themselves the lineal descendants of those heroes of ancient history, who were arrayed against the enemies of the Lord, they are actuated by the same motives and feelings which led the hand of Judah to the massacre. The foe is a Pagan who does not fast, nor kiss the church, nor wear a watch. All feelings of humanity are thrown to the winds, and a high reward in Heaven awaits the king and the blood-thirsty soldier for the burning of the hamlet, the capture of the property, and the murder of the accursed Heathen; self-interest rarely interferes in the tragedy of blood, and the captive is seldom secure even for the sake of the forthcoming ransom, or to pass the residue of miserable existence, a drudge in the household of the spoiler. The words of absolution from the mouth of the royal priest usher in the ruthless slaughter, and the name of the most high God is wantonly employed to consecrate the ensuing scenes of savage barbarity.

Abyssinia in her present state, belongs altogether to the ancient world. The pure principles of Christianity exist not in the land, and there remains not one solitary hope, that in her degraded condition she can tend, in any way to lift the curtain of moral darkness which hangs over the interior of the African continent; nor, redolent of evil principles and practice, is it to be desired, that she should be permitted to exert any important influence over the surrounding tribes.

The instruction gained from her teaching would prove small indeed, and the advance would be but trifling, from the state of heathenish superstition in which all are plunged alike.

The bigotry of ages is confirmed by the self-pride and the excessive ignorance of the present race; and on the rising, or on the unborn generation, rests the sole hope for the moral resurrection of the people.

But years must necessarily elapse before the folly and the falsehood of the nation can be successfully combated, ere the errors of her impure creed can be plucked out by the root, and the pure light of Christianity be introduced even by the most zealous and ardent messenger of the true Gospel.

(Signed) D. C. GRAHAM, *Captain,*
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The Abyssinian Church.

Christianity is the national religion over the more elevated portions of Abyssinia, but the wild Galla has overrun her fairest provinces, and located himself in her most pleasant places. The bigotted Moslem crowds thick upon the skirts of her distracted empire, and the tenets she professes, are base, foolish, and degrading, engrafted on the superstitions of the Jew, the Mahomedan and the Pagan; promulgated by men, rude, ignorant and uninstructed, and received by a people emerging into the first stage of civilization. The light of religion must have been feeble even in the beginning, but as it was imparted, so it still remains. Sects and parties have arisen, and province has been banded against province in all the fiery wrath of the zealot; but lost in the maze of subtle controversy, these internal wars have raged for generations without disturbing the original doctrine, and the same errors of the Church prevail to this day throughout the land, as when first propounded in the beginning of the fourth century.

But the nation has not alone been called upon to sustain internal commotion, together with the fierce assaults of the heathen and of the fanatic followers of the false prophet. The measure of her oppression was not filled until the bitter cup had been drained, and deeply drained, of the converting zeal of European priesthood, until the usual horrors attendant upon religious war had been painfully undergone, and the requisite sacrifice of the life-stream of her children had been unsparingly poured out, when nearest and dearest relatives rallied under opposite standards, and when the same cry of destruction rung from either host—the glory of the true faith.

The glowing zeal of the Jesuit has seldom been displayed in more glaring colors, or in more decided defeat, than in the attempts so perseveringly made by that dread society to draw within the meshes of her encircling net, the remote church of Ethiopia. And although the means employed are to be justly condemned, still that ardour must be the theme of the high praise of all, which impelled old men and young to dare the difficulties and dangers of a rude uncivilized land, with exposure to the prejudices of a people, as bigotted as themselves in the cause of their religion.

But the wily system of establishing rival orders and monasteries, of mortification, of snapping asunder domestic ties, and of collecting toge-

ther bands of discontented enthusiasts, well served the interests of the Catholic faith; and there were always to be found servants obedient to bear instructions to the farthest corners of the earth; men who relinquished few comforts or enjoyments on quitting their austere cells, who were prepared at all hazards and in all manners to carry into execution the will of their superiors, and who gloried in the prospect either of erecting an eternal fabric in honor of their faith and their own peculiar order, or of obtaining the equally bright crown of martyrdom.

But the custom of ages had struck too deep into the heart of the Abyssinian.

The power of the officiating clergy was paramount in the land. All the passions and the prejudices of the multitude were too firmly enlisted in the cause of ancient belief; and degraded as was the Christianity of the country, its forms and tenets were not more absurd and not less pertinaciously supported, than those innovations of the Roman faith, which were so fiercely, though so ineffectually attempted.

The soft wily speech and the thunder of excommunication were alike disregarded. Treachery and force were both tried, and found equally unavailing. Blood flowed for a season like the swollen torrent, and the sound of wailing was heard from the palace to the peasant's hut; but the storm expended itself and finally passed away, and after the struggle of a century, the discomfited monks relinquished their attempts upon the church of the monophysite, without leaving behind one solitary convert to their faith, and bearing along with them the loud maledictions of the much-injured nation upon the head of the intruding and officious European.

Abyssinia has not, however, always displayed that firmness of purpose, and that stoutness of heart to do battle for her existing creed. Bowing her neck in olden time to the yoke of Judaism, she now in many localities basely truckles, as convenient opportunity offers, to the tenets of the Islam faith.

The date of her embracing a portion of the Jewish creed is lost in the obscurity of ages. Some of her sons, who love even the notoriety of doubtful fame, glorying in an origin from Menelek, the son of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, relate the most ridiculous exploits of these their venerated ancestors, who crowned a long course of iniquity by plundering the temple of Jerusalem, and carrying off the spoil and the

holy books into Ethiopia; whilst others trace the legend of emigration to the period of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. But whatever be the true date of their arrival, it is certain that the Hebrews have exercised a much greater influence upon the affairs of this country than in any other since the day of their dispersion; and although the taint of their religion was abjured by the nation on the Promethean touch of the true Gospel, the children of Israel, moulding a portion of their worship on the formula of the Christian faith, and esteemed as sorcerers and cunning artists in the land, found a safe asylum among the mountains, and exist to the present day here, as elsewhere, a separate and peculiar nation,

In the year 330, after the birth of our Saviour, Meropius, a merchant of Tyre, during a commercial voyage to India, landed on the coast of Ethiopia, where he was murdered by the barbarians, and his two sons, Fumentius and Edesius, both devout men, falling into the hands of the savage inhabitants, were made prisoners, and carried as slaves before the Emperor. The abilities, the information, and the peaceable demeanor of the brothers, soon gained not only their release, but high office in the court, and living in the full confidence of the monarch until his decease, and subsequently under the protection of the Queen mother, the good will of the entire nation quickly succeeded. The work of conversion was commenced, and proceeded with wonderful rapidity and success; a thriving branch was shortly added to the great Eastern Church.

Bearing the happy tidings, Frumentius appeared in Alexandria, and was received with open arms by the Patriarch Athanasius. Loaded with honors and consecrated the first Bishop of Ethiopia, a relation was thus happily commenced with Egypt, which has remained firm and friendly to the present day; and throughout fifteen centuries has bestowed upon a captive priest the high office of Patriarch Abuna of the Ethiopian church.

On his return to the country of his hopes, Frumentius found that the spark of life had spread rapidly throughout the gloomy darkness of the land. Baptism was instituted, Deacons and Presbyters appointed, churches erected, and a firm foundation laid, whereon to establish the Christian religion in Abyssinia. Frumentius was deservedly honored with a favored niche in the annals of her Church History, under the

title of Salama, which formed the subject of high praise to all the sacred poets of Ethiopia.

“ Hail him with the voice of
Joy, sing praise to Salama,
The doors of pity and of mercy
And of pleasant grace ; Salute
Those blessed hands, bearing the
Pure torch of the Gospel.
For the splendour of Christ’s Church
Has enlightened our darkness.”

During the succeeding century, priests and apostles, men of wonderful sanctity, flocked into the empire from all parts of the East, and miracles the most stupendous are related in the legends of those days. Mountains were removed, and the storms of the angry ocean stilled by the mere application of the staff. The adder and the basilisk glided harmlessly under foot ; and rivers stayed their roaring torrent, that the sandal of the holy man should remain unstained by the flood. Aragainé raised the dead ; the fingers of Likands flamed like tapers of fire ; Samuel rode upon his lion, and thus the kingdom of Arwe, the old serpent of Ethiopia, was utterly overthrown, destroyed, and annihilated.

The Abyssinians now rose to the scale of subtle casuists and disputants. Abstruse doctrines were propounded, and speculative theories largely indulged in, and the sun of existence set upon the generation ere the knotty points had been satisfactorily determined of how long Adam remained in Paradise before his Fall ? And whether in his present state he hold dominion over the angels ?

In the year 481, the celebrated council of Chalcedon, lighted up the torch of misunderstanding regarding the two natures of Christ. The Eastern church split and separated in mortal feud, and the Saracen pounced upon Egypt, rent and wasted by discord and distraction. The Abyssinians denouncing the Council as a meeting of fools, concurred in the opinion of the Alexandrian Patriarch.

The faith of the Monophysite was declared to be the one only true and orthodox, and the banished Dioscorus received all the honors of a martyr.

“ The Kings of the earth divided the unity of God and man.
Sing praises to the martyr, who laughed their religion to scorn.
He was treated with indignity, they plucked out his flowing beard ;
Yea, and tore the teeth from his venerable face. But in heaven a halo of honor
shall encircle Dioscorus.”

The successor of St. Mark, however, could barely retain his own existence in Egypt during the succeeding oppressions and exactions of the Moslem; and Ethiopia, his remote charge, now nearly isolated from the remainder of the world, remained for the next ten centuries a sealed book to European history, preserving her independence from all foreign yoke, and guarding in safety the flame of that faith which she had inherited from her fathers.

The reign of the Ascetics succeeded to that of disputation, and men lacerated their bodies, and lived in holes and caves of the earth like wild beasts. Tekla Haimanot and Eustathios were the great founders of monkery in the land. An angel announced the birth of one, and the other floated over the sea, borne in safety amidst the folds of his leathern garment. Miracles still continued to be occasionally performed. Sanctity was further enhanced by mortification of the flesh, and austerity of life was highly praised and followed by the admiring mob.

The original discipline of the anchorite was severe in the extreme. It was to be continually girt round the loins with heavy chains, and to remain for days immersed in the cold mountain stream, to recline upon the bare earth, and to subsist alone upon a scanty vegetable diet.

Monasteries were at length founded, and fields and revenues set apart for the convenience of their inmates; and although a visiting superior was appointed to check corruption and punish innovation or transgression, the asperities of the monastic life gradually softened down. The *cheggue* preferred the comforts of a settled abode to wearisome tours and visitations; further immunities were granted to all loving a life of ease and spiritual license, and the commonwealth deplored the loss of a great portion of her subjects, who assisted her neither in taxes, nor in military service.

Ethiopia meanwhile extended her wide empire on every side, and her religion was imposed upon the conquered territories. From the great river Gochoh to the frontiers of Nubia, the crutch and the cross pervaded the land. Churches were erected on every convenient spot, and the blue badge of nominal Christianity encircled the necks of an ignorant multitude. The usual wars and rebellion arose, and schisms and sects fill up the archives of ten centuries, with all the uninteresting precision of more civilized countries. But still the Church flourished; the Patriarch was regularly received from Alexandria, a long list of ninety-five

Abunas flows quietly through the dull pages of Abyssinian record, from the time of Frumentius the First until the days of the venerable Simeon, who whilst gallantly defending the faith of his fathers, was barbarously murdered by the European partizans of the Italian Jesuit. It was not until the commencement of the sixteenth century, that any further mention was made of the Abyssinian Church, which during the darkness of the middle ages had fallen into complete oblivion; but rumours about that period were whispered abroad of a Christian monarch and a Christian nation established in the centre of Africa, and the happy news was first brought to the court of Portugal, that a Christian Church still existed, which had for ages successfully resisted, among the lofty mountains of Abyssinia, the fierce attacks of the sanguinary Saracen.

In the year 1499, Pedro Cavilham succeeded in reaching Shoa, where he was received with that favor which novelty usually secures; and although the stranger was prevented by the ancient laws of the kingdom from leaving the land, the quest had been successfully performed; the first link re-established of a chain, which had been broken for ages, and shortly afterwards the glories of Prester John and his Christian court were fully disclosed to abate the intense anxiety that reigned in the heart of every inhabitant of the West.

In due time, an Abyssinian ambassador made his appearance in Portugal; unbounded delight was experienced by king Emanuel and his court, and every honor was lavished upon Matthew, the merchant of Shoa. All believed that the Abyssinians were devout Catholics, and that a vast empire, estimated at four times its actual extent, was about to fall under the dominion of the Roman Church. A mission on a great scale was fitted out, the journey was safely accomplished, and excited fancy rioted for a time in the description of palaces and fountains which never existed, and pomp, riches, and regal power utterly unknown in the land.

Missions continued from either court during the succeeding forty years. An alliance was formed. Men learned in the arts and sciences were despatched to settle in Abyssinia. Zaga Zaba arrived in Lisbon, invested with full powers to satisfy the interests of both countries, temporal as well as spiritual. But the difference of faith was now for the first time understood. The bitter enmity of the Roman creed stood prominently to view, and the envoy, after studying the details of the

Catholic doctrine, and refusing to subscribe a similar contract on behalf of his Church, was unscrupulously put to a violent death in a Portuguese prison.

The first flattering ideas regarding the religion of the country being thus found erroneous, the delusion respecting the extent and power of the mighty empire was next to fall to the ground. The Galla were now streaming in hordes from the interior, and Graigne, the Mahomedan invader, carrying fire and sword with his army throughout the country. The dying Coptish Patriarch of Abyssinia was prevailed upon to nominate as his successor John Bermudez, a resident Portuguese, and the Romish priest, hurried by the king, proceeded to seek immediate military assistance from the courts of Rome and Lisbon.

Schemes of ambition flitted over the minds of the first conquerors of India, and an alliance with Ethiopia seemed highly desirable, as a handle for further acquisition in the East. But dilatory measures delayed the arrival of the Portuguese fleet until the suing monarch had been gathered to his fathers, and Christopher, the son of the famous Vasco de Gama anchored in the harbour of Massowah, at a time when the new emperor Claudius was sorely pressed to sustain himself upon the throne of his ancestors. The opportunity was not neglected by the Archbishop to reduce the heretic church to the fold of the Roman sec; and a series of attempts were commenced, equally to be deplored, from the mischief which they created, and the unworthy means that were employed during the struggle.

The signal service rendered by the Portuguese troops during the ensuing wars, the total route of the Galla and Moslem, with the slaughter of their invading leader in the battle, placed Bermudez in a position to demand high terms from the re-instated monarch. The conversion of the emperor to the Roman Catholic faith, and the possession of one-third of the kingdom were imperiously proposed, and scornfully rejected. Excommunication was threatened by the proud prelate of the West, and utterly disregarded by king Claudius, who retorted, that the Pope himself was a heretic. Open hostilities broke out, and although the superior discipline of the Europeans for a time gave them the advantage, they were at length separated by a wily stratagem, and hurried to different quarters of the kingdom, and Bermudez being then seized, was conveyed in honorable exile to the rugged mountains of Efat.

Although much blood and considerable treasure had been thus fruitlessly expended, the conversion of Ethiopia was far from being forgotten in Europe, and the spark of hope was further kept alive by an Abyssinian priest, who asserted on his arrival in Rome, that the failure of Bermudez had entirely arisen from his own absurd and brutal conduct, and that the utmost deference would be paid to men of sense and capacity. Ignatius Loyola volunteered to repair in person to re-unite Ethiopia and the Roman Catholic church, but his talents being required for more important objects, the Pope refused the desired permission to the great founder of the Society of Jesus, and thirteen Missionaries from the new order were chosen instead. Nunez Baretto was elevated to the dignity of Patriarch, and Andre Oviedo appointed provisional successor.

At that period, the navigation of the Red Sea was rendered dangerous by numerous Saracen fleets, and the Patriarch deeming it inexpedient to hazard his own valuable person in the perils of the voyage, reposed quietly at Goa; whilst a deputation, headed by Gonsalvez Rodrigues, a priest of the secondary rank, was despatched in advance to ascertain the capabilities of the route, and the sentiments of the reigning monarch.

The Emperor Claudius little relished the arrival of these monks, and Rodrigues entirely failed in every attempt at conviction on the points at issue—that the Pope, as representative of Christ upon earth, was the true head of all Christians, and that there was no salvation whatever out of the pale of the Catholic Church; he was dismissed with the reply, that the people of Ethiopia would not lightly abandon the faith of their forefathers. The monk retired to work upon the mind of the monarch by the brilliancy of his controversial writing, but a lengthy treatise on the true faith produced no happy result, and the envoy, disgusted with his reception, returned shortly afterwards to Goa.

The spiritual conclave was plunged into consternation by the unhappy intelligence, and after much mature deliberation it was resolved, that the dignity of the Patriarch and of the great king of Portugal could not be exposed to the consequences attending the ill favor of the Emperor of Abyssinia, that therefore the prelate should still remain the guest of the Bishop of Nicaca; whilst the daring and restless Oviedo, with a small train of attendants, attempted the conquest.

Arriving in safety, the Jesuit experienced a most friendly reception from the Emperor Claudius, and although the letters of recommendation

from the Pope were received with mistrust and impatience, the habitual mildness of the monarch restrained him from any overt act of oppression. Deceived by this calm behaviour during a second audience, the Bishop was sufficiently fool-hardy to represent, in the most insolent language, the enormous errors under which the Emperor laboured, and to demand imperatively, whether or not he intended to submit himself to the authority of the successor of St. Peter, and thus remove the heavy obligation under which his empire already groaned? King Claudius replied, that he was well inclined towards the Portuguese nation; that he would grant them lands and settlements in his country; that permission would not be withheld to the private exercise of the religion of the West; but that as the Abyssinian Church had been for ages united to the charge of the Patriarch of Alexandria, a subject of such serious alteration must be canvassed before a full assembly of divines.

Indignant at what he termed Ethiopian perfidy, but still buoyed up with the faint hope of realizing his object, Oviedo changed his mode of attack, and addressed a laboured remonstrance to the monarch, written in the hypocritical tone of false friendship; earnestly entreating him to recall to his remembrance the assistance rendered by Europeans to his afflicted country, and the many promises made by his sire in the day of his urgent distress, imploring him at the same time to preserve a stern vigilance upon the evil influence of the empress, and of the ministers of state; for in matters of faith, the love of kindred must give away to the love of Christ, and in similar situations, the nearest relation often proves the bitterest enemy to the salvation of the soul.

This insidious reasoning was, however, vainly expended upon the intelligent Claudius, and served but to turn his heart further from the Roman and his cause. The offer of a public controversy on points of disputed faith being shortly afterwards accepted, the emperor entered the lists in presence of the assembled court, and utterly defeated the subtleties of the Italian priest by his clear knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; and thus, notwithstanding the conviction of the Portuguese Missionary, that by supernatural aid he had triumphantly refuted all the arguments urged by his illustrious antagonist, it was fully decreed by the Abyssinian conference, that neither king nor people, owed obligation or obedience whatsoever to the Church of Rome.

Still Oviedo was by no means reduced to silence. Treatise after treatise was published on the controversy, to confound the minds of the Ethiopians. The errors of the Alexandrian faith were fiercely attacked in every form and fashion, and the superior beauties of the Catholic religion fully expounded. But no advantage resulted, rejoinders and confutations followed fast from the insulted clergy, and the Bishop furious at the thoughts of his futile exertions to gain a footing in the country, entertaining no hope of making one single convert, whether among prince or people; resolved upon a last effort in the struggle, and on the fifth of February 1559, he issued his spiritual ban over the land, proclaiming that the entire nation of Abyssinia, high and low, learned and ignorant, having refused to obey the Church of Rome, practising the unholy rite of circumcision, objecting to eat the flesh of the hog and the hare, and indulging in many other flagrant enormities, were delivered over to the judgment of the spiritual courts, to be punished in persons and goods, in public and in private, by every means the faithful could devise.

The folly of issuing this curious rescript without any means of enforcement was fully appreciated, and the tyrannical conduct of the Bishop only served to strengthen the emperor in the bands of his own faith; finding, as was observed by an historian of the times, that Popery and its wiles were the more dangerous and reprehensible, as the veil was withdrawn from the spirit of her tenets. •

There is every reason to believe, that the succeeding invasion of the Adaiel was procured through the treacherous designs of the Jesuits, but the event again proved disastrous to their cause. Although the revenge of the baffled Bishop was allayed in a torrent of blood, yet the death of the mild, moderate and liberal Claudius, who perished in the field of battle, shed a baneful influence on the ensuing efforts, and the sceptre devolved into the hands of his brother Adam, a haughty and vindictive prince, who is depicted in Portuguese records as cruel and hard of heart, and utterly insensible to the beauteous mysteries of the Catholic faith.

Swearing vengeance against the Latins, to whose treason he attributed the murder of his brother and the ruin of his country, the new monarch seized all the estates which had been granted to the Portuguese for rendered service; threatened the Bishop and his colleagues with instant death if they presumed to propagate the errors of the Romish

Church, and on a humble remonstrance being attempted, in the violence of his wrath he rushed upon the Missionary with drawn sword, vowing to immolate him on the spot. The weapon, however, say the holy fathers, dropped miraculously from his impious hand, and for a season the last extremity of vengeance was exchanged for a system of vile durance.

Portuguese troops in the mean time arrived from Goa, and the Bharnegash, the lord of the sea coast, bought over by the gold of India, and stirred up by the wily emissaries of the viceroy, assembled his forces in rebellion, and marching with his European allies to the capital, defeated and slew the emperor in a pitched battle, and rescued the Jesuit missionaries from their unpleasant captivity.

Warned by former difficulty and distress, the worthy fathers now assumed a more modest and humble demeanor, and were allowed to settle again in their old haunt of Maignagna, where they remained for a time unmolested by the new emperor, Malac Sarshed, who inherited all the horror of his father to the Catholic creed, although tempered by the mildness of his uncle Claudius. But the jealous monks had not yet relinquished their hope of advancement, and bending to the pressure of the times, the deep plot was veiled under the garb of passive obedience. The most pressing solicitations were dispatched to Goa for assistance, and the dauntless Oviedo pledged himself, with six hundred staunch Europeans, to convert not only the empire of Abyssinia, but all the adjacent countries.

The scheme, however, did not suit the politics of the day, and in 1560, the Bishop received an order from the head of his Society, to repair forthwith to his more promising charge in Japan; loath to abandon all his favorite projects of ambition in the country, and utterly reckless of truth, he addressed the most specious letters to the Pope, holding out a certain prospect of prostrating the Church of Ethiopia before the Apostolic throne; whilst to his immediate superior, he dilated upon the richness of the land and the mines of pure gold, which he falsely asserted to exist in every province of the kingdom. But his artful motives were thoroughly pierced by the more wily successor of St. Peter, and vessels soon after arrived on the coast of Africa, to convey the reluctant fathers to the Monastery of St. Xavier in Goa.

(Signed) D. C. GRAHAM, *Captain,*
Principal Assistant to the Embassy.

History of the Abyssinian Church.—Continued.

Miserable indeed appeared the chance of conversion, and after a fierce struggle of thirty years, there remained not one priest of the Romish faith, to administer the Sacraments to the numerous European settlers and descendants in the country. Even the Jesuits themselves lost heart for the time; but the zeal of Philip the Second stirred the dying embers, and fresh candidates for strife, honor, and martyrdom, were soon in the field.

Peter Pero Pays and Antonio de Mantzerado, disguised as Armenian merchants, first attempted the perilous quest, but being wrecked on the Arabian coast, they were recognized as Christian ministers, and languished during seven years in a Moslem dungeon.

Goa next poured forth her priests to the ineffectual contest in seeking the promised land. Abraham de Georgis was discovered in Turkish garb on the island of Massowah, and the governor swore by the Holy Prophet, that since the Kafir had donned the attire of the true believer, he should also adopt the tenets of the true faith, or die the death of a dog. But the Jesuit clung to his creed and suffered accordingly, and shortly afterwards Jean Baptiste being detected in the assumed costume by the Turks of Commera, he also shared the same fate as his immediate predecessor in the thorny path of martyrdom.

Thus even the road itself seemed to close, and all intercourse was denied with a country, wherein the presence of Europeans was neither sought for nor desired; and which would have been suffered to remain unmolested, had not ideas been inflamed by the exaggerated accounts of its wealth, that still pervaded the imagination of all classes throughout the Western world.

Don Alexis de Menezes, the zealous Archbishop of Goa, who had already with fire and sword propagated Christianity in all Malabar, now entered the lists, and his sagacious and discerning mind selected the vicar of St. Anne as a fit tool for the execution of his project. Melchior Sylva, a converted Brahmin, might from his colour and language pass through the Turkish wicket; his zeal was great as that of his superior, and the valuable presents whereof he was made the bearer, might prove a bait sufficiently tempting to lure the simple Abyssinian into a fresh connexion.

The intelligence of his safe arrival, and of the gracious reception of the presents again roused the ardent spirit of the order of Jesus, and Peter Pays was quickly ransomed from the Arabs, and despatched with a full train of priests to Ethiopia, where he arrived in September of the year 1603.

Superior in every respect to his predecessors, this Missionary instead of attempting to carry his measures by force and overbearing insolence, sought the softer path of insinuation ; and whilst his extensive knowledge and plausible address proved strong recommendations in his favor, many circumstances also conspired to forward his views. The country was in a most unsettled state, and the assistance of a few Portuguese troops could turn the scale of war. The condition of the Church was low and miserable. Eight years of incessant strife and distraction had crushed the very name of learning and literature. Few persons were to be found, who could read, write, or dispute. Ignorant and unworthy men filled every sacred office, and the ancient stout defenders of the Alexandrian faith, had been swept away on the battle field.

Amidst wars and rumours of wars, Peter quietly settled with his followers at Maignagna. Schools were opened, and the wonder ran through the land, that youths of tender age could refute the most learned sages of the wilderness of Walpayet. The curiosity of Za Denghel, the temporary occupant of the throne was excited, and Peter with his erudite pupils was summoned to the court.

Prompted by the hope of obtaining assistance from Portugal, this weak prince, under an oath of secrecy, immediately embraced the religion of his guest. But his time was fully occupied in the more worldly object of strengthening himself upon a throne, to which he had been elevated by his evil genius, and the falling away from the faith of his forefathers being at length whispered abroad, a rebellion broke over his devoted head.

The approaching storm having been perceived by the monk, he withdrew from court before the burst of a revolution, which for some time crushed his every hope of success. The emperor was slain, new aspirants strove for the ascendancy, and war reigned for a season throughout the entire land.

Confident in the near approach of the Portuguese troops which had been requested when Sylva carried to India the tidings of the first conversion ;

Peter now resolved upon the bold game of espousing the weaker party, and thus gaining a firmer hold in the event of success. The expected reinforcements did not however arrive in time, and the defeat and death of his *protégé* was followed by the advancement of the pretender Sunscus to the throne of the empire.

Notwithstanding his appearance as a declared partizan in the opposing ranks, Peter's abilities as an architect now created a fresh diversion in his favor. The novel idea of a two-storied edifice engrossed the thoughts of the reigning king, and men flocked from the remotest parts of the country to gaze upon a fabric of stone, which was considered to be one of the wonders of the world.

A Missionary possessing the varied abilities and acquirements of Pays, could not be long in gaining ascendancy over a rude and illiterate monarch, and by address and perseverance, he had soon effected that which the threats and violence of his predecessors had vainly attempted during a long course of years.

Ras Cella Christoo, brother to the emperor, was the first fruit of the harvest. Partaking of the Holy Supper with the Latins, he publicly embraced their religion, and many chiefs and nobles followed his illustrious example. Crowded assemblies were held, in which the eloquence of the Jesuit entirely bore down the feeble efforts of the ignorant and uncultivated natives. The holiness of life, which was strictly preserved among the neophytes of the Catholics, added to the impression entertained of their wisdom, and the introduction of useful arts, raised the glory of the fathers still higher in the land, and the prospect of the aid of disciplined soldiers from the West overturned the last remaining scruple in the mind of the monarch.

An edict was published, interdicting all persons from holding office, who were not well inclined towards the Latin religion, and severe punishments were threatened for the promulgation of ancient doctrines. Assistance was solicited from Rome and Lisbon, and the work of European persecution favorably commenced by scourging with whips, all those stubborn monks who refused to forego their ancient belief.

Abba Simeon, the Abuna, repaired to the court to remonstrate with the emperor on the scandalous interference with his prerogatives in convening meetings and authorizing debates upon ecclesiastical matters; but his pride was timely soothed by the royal assurance, that all had been

undertaken for the benefit of true religion, and that the subject should be fully discussed in his own presence. Again the subtleties and dialectics of the Missionaries prevailed, and the total defeat of the Abuna and his clergy was followed by a second and more severe ordinance, awarding the penalty of death to all who should henceforth deny the two natures of Christ.

Wonderful was the sensation created by this severe edict, so diametrically at variance with the mild spirit of religion, and with all the ancient usages of the land. Aware of the feelings of the strong party at court, as well as of the entire body of the people, the Abuna placarded on the doors of the chapel an excommunication to all who should accept the religion of the Franks, and the monarch irritated by this resistance, published a manifesto, that his subjects should forthwith embrace the Catholic faith.

This served as the signal trumpet for the fight. All classes armed themselves in defence of their religion, and Aclius, the king's son-in-law, placed himself at the head of the malcontents in Tigre.

Not yet thoroughly prepared for the struggle, the emperor found it convenient for a time to temporize, and requested one further debate, which was to prove final between the disputants. The mild Abuna listened to the proposal, and accompanied by a large train of monks appeared in the royal camp, whilst the Jesuit and his colleagues advanced into the arena from the opposite side. The controversy was renewed, and raged fiercely for six days; but disputes in religion cannot be adjusted by the reasoning of doctors, and the parties withdrew mutually incensed against each other.

One further effort was made to restore the disturbed harmony. The empress Hamilmala, and many of the courtiers, with tears implored the king to desist from his undertaking; and the Patriarch and the clergy throwing themselves prostrate on the earth, embraced his knees, and entreated him to turn a deaf ear to the poisonous insinuations of the deceitful Jesuits, and graciously to allow his subjects to remain faithful to the religion of their forefathers; but the heart of the monarch remained closed to the prayer. The Abuna quitted the court, plunged in the deepest distress, and a bloody war ensued, which shook the empire to its foundation.

When Aclius fully understood the last resolution taken by his father-in-law to defend the Catholics and their religion, he publicly appealed

to the people of Tigre, and proclaimed that all who were disposed to embrace the Jesuitical faith might repair to the deluded emperor; whilst those who held to the ancient belief, should forthwith gather under his standard; and finding himself shortly afterwards at the head of a large army, he marched towards the royal camp, resolved to establish the ancient doctrine of the land, or to perish in the attempt.

The Abuna Simeon, who had attained the venerable age of one hundred years, joined the army of the defenders of the Alexandrian faith, and in giving his Patriarchal blessing assured the soldiery, that all who should fall in the combat died the death of a martyr, and would receive their reward in heaven. The desired effect was produced, and the hearts of the entire force burned with one eager zeal to meet the accursed enemies of their religion.

On the appearance of the inflamed force, a reconciliation was attempted, and the daughter of the emperor was made the bearer of terms to her rebel lord. Her tears and entreaties were however totally disregarded. The impetuous youth prepared for instant attack, and the princess had barely time to regain her father's tent, when hostilities were commenced.

The soldiers of the viceroy rushed furiously upon the royal encampment, and Aclius succeeded in forcing his way, at the head of a small body of troops, to the very pavilion of his father-in-law. But he was here struck from his horse by a stone, and stumbled upon the ground. A panic seized the army of the fallen leader, and the rabble casting away their arms, fled in all directions.

The aged Abuna found himself alone and deserted in the same spot which he had occupied during the attack. His years and high clerical learning disarmed the violence of the Abyssinian soldiery, but a Portuguese partizan at length threw himself upon the Patriarch, and regardless of his white and venerable hairs, transfixed him with a spear. A frightful massacre ensued, and the heads of the principal leaders of the unsuccessful rebellion were exposed on the gates of the capital, as a bloody warning to the seditious.

Strengthened by this signal victory, other points of the Alexandrian creed were attacked in succession, and the time of the Jesuits was fully occupied in the translation into Ethiopic of sundry dogmatical treatises on subjects of disputed faith. But the barbarism of the language was

despised by most. The Latin interpolation was abhorred as magic by all, and a furious paper controversy raged for a time until the Abyssinians becoming scurrilous, the wrath of the monarch was again roused, and he issued a severe edict, wherein the people were forbidden from celebrating the Jewish sabbath, which from time immemorial had hitherto been kept sacred.

The inhabitants of Begemder flew to arms, and people from all parts of the country groaning under the yoke of foreign oppression, poured in to join the standard of rebellion, which Joanel had reared on the plains of his government. A horde of Galla delighting in the confusion, offered their assistance, and the most haughty conditions were speedily conveyed to court from a large assembly in arms.

Again the most earnest entreaties were employed to induce the emperor to compromise; but influenced by the words of the Jesuits, he called together his principal chieftains, monks, and learned men, and in their presence solemnly declared, that he would defend the Catholic religion to the last drop of his blood, adding, that it was the first duty of his subjects to obey their legitimate monarch.

Energetic measures were forthwith agreed upon, and at the head of a large army, the king proceeded in person to the war. Joanel finding himself too weak to contend in the plains, withdrew to the inaccessible mountains, where the blockade of the royal troops soon caused a scarcity of provisions. His forces gradually deserted, and he himself escaping to the Galla, was pursued, betrayed, and put to death.

This reverse sustained by the defenders of the old cause, did not however intimidate the inhabitants of Damat, a province situated on the banks of the Nile; for hardly had the emperor reached his capital, than the population rose *en masse*, with the determination of dethroning a monarch, who so basely truckled to foreign yoke, and of driving from the land the authors of its destruction. An army of fourteen thousand warriors was speedily organized, and monks and hermits, burning with zeal in the cause emerged from the cave and from the wilderness, to join the fast swelling ranks.

Ras Cella Christos marched against the rebels, but desertion considerably thinned his troops, and he confronted the enemy with barely one-half the numerical strength of their formidable army. Governor of the province, and greatly beloved by the people, a proposal was tendered to

him, that if he would only lend his assistance in burning the monkish books, and hanging the worthy fathers themselves upon tall trees, he might be seated upon the imperial throne of his ancestors. But the general despising the offer, and resting confidence in the firelocks of the Portuguese, rushed to the attack. The combat raged fiercely for a time. Four hundred monks devoting themselves to death, carried destruction through the royal host; but the tide of victory set at length in his favor, and after a fearful carnage on either side, he found himself master of the field.

Great rejoicings at court followed the news of this success. Peter declared that heaven, by the extermination of his enemies, had given the desired sign, that the Roman Catholic should be the religion of the land, and the emperor, who partly from fear of his subjects, and partly from dislike to relinquish his supernumerary wives and concubines, had not as yet publicly professed the Latin religion, now openly embraced the faith, and confessed his sins to the triumphant Jesuit.

A letter containing the royal sentiments was published for the benefit of the nation. "The king henceforth obeys the Pope of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, chief of the Apostles, who could neither err in doctrine nor in conduct, and all subjects are hereby advised to adopt the same creed." And the missionary who now reasonably imagined, that the work was satisfactorily concluded, wrote to the courts of Rome and Lisbon, requesting that a Patriarch and twenty ecclesiastics might be immediately sent to the vineyard, adding, that although the harvest was plentiful, the labourers were but few.

The happy tidings were received by Philip the Fourth of Spain; Mutio Vitelesse, the general of Jesuits offered to proceed in person, but the Pope refused permission, as had been the case with his predecessor Loyola, and Alphonse Mendez, a learned doctor of the Society of Jesus, was inaugurated at Lisbon with all the customary solemnities.

After suffering much difficulty and delay in his passage, the Portuguese Patriarch at length arrived on the Danakil coast, with a large train of priests, servants, masons, and musicians. The same greediness and cupidity were experienced amongst the savage Adaiel, that the traveller finds at the present day: baseness and avarice having stamped their character for generations; but the troubles of a weary march were soon forgotten in the cordial reception which awaited the party at the royal camp, and

the day was finally fixed when the homage of the king and of the country should be rendered to the Pope of Rome.

On the 11th of February 1626, the court and the nobles of the land were assembled in the open air. Two rich thrones were occupied by the monarch and his distinguished guest, and a surrounding multitude gazed upon the imposing ceremony in silence. The hour is come, exclaimed Mendez, when the king shall satisfy the debt of his ancestors, and submit himself and his people to the only true head of the Church. A copy of the Gospel was produced, and the monarch falling upon his knees, took the oath of homage. "We king of the kings of Ethiopia, believe and confess, that the Pope of Rome is the true successor of the Apostle St. Peter, and that he holds the same power, dignity and dominion over the whole Christian church. Therefore we promise, offer, and swear sincere obedience to the holy father, Urban, by God's grace, Pope and our Lord, and throw humbly at his feet our person and our kingdom."

As the emperor rose from his position, Ras Cella Christos suddenly drawing his sword, shouted aloud: "What is now done, is done for ever, and whoso in future disclaims the act, shall taste the sharp edge of his trusty weapon. I do homage only to true Catholic kings." The monks, clergy, and noblemen followed the example of their superiors, and the assembly was closed by a public edict proclaimed through the royal herald, that all Abyssinians should, under pain of death, forthwith embrace the Roman religion.

Palaces and revenues were set apart for the ministers of the new faith. Seminaries for youth were established throughout the country, and baptism and ordination progressed in peace. The success of the Jesuits increased rapidly, and many thousand souls were enrolled, who had been converted from the delusions of the Alexandrian creed.

The trial of two years failed, however, to convince the nation of the benefits of the new religion, and the Emperor and Patriarch could not deceive themselves in the fact, that the cause advanced rather in appearance than in reality. Missionaries who entered the native churches were found murdered in their beds, the most disparaging stories were everywhere circulated regarding the holy fathers, and more particularly on the representation of Scriptural performances at the Paschal feast,

when demons being introduced by Romans upon the stage, the spectators rushed simultaneously from the theatre exclaiming, "Alas they have brought with them devils from the infernal regions," and the tale spread like wildfire throughout the land.

Nothing daunted by the unfortunate fate of Aclius and Joanes, Tekla Georgis, another son-in-law of the emperor, with a large body of the discontented rose to defend the religion of their forefathers. Burning the crosses and rosaries together with a Jesuit priest, who fell into their hands, the party rapidly increased, and the emperor was compelled to march an army to quell the insurrection. The rebels were completely routed by Rebaxus, the viceroy of Tigre, and all who fell into his hands, men, women and children, were barbarously massacred. Georgis and his sister Adera concealed themselves in a cave during three days, but were at length discovered and brought before the irritated emperor, and condemned, by the advice of the Jesuits, to be burned to death as a heretic. Georgis was allowed by the monarch publicly to solicit the Patriarch to be admitted into the Roman church, but it being afterwards considered politic to imagine that his intentions were insincere, the unfortunate prince was hung in front of the palace in presence of the whole court; and his devoted sister fifteen days afterwards, suffered the same fate upon the same tree; notwithstanding that the most strenuous efforts were made to save her life by the queen, and by all classes of society.

To increase the dread effects of his tyranny, the emperor now issued a manifesto, that even as he had punished with death the obstinacy of his own son-in-law, so he would of a surety not spare any who in future committed a like transgression. The remarks of the worthy missionary Antoine regarding this execution, will shew the spirit which animated the fathers in their course of persecution, so novel in the annals of Abyssinia, and so contrary to the mildness of the Christian faith. He who reads with attention the history of Ethiopia will observe, that at no previous period was such ardent zeal displayed for the honor of religion, and a direct miracle indeed must have induced the emperor to hang his own son-in-law in the blessed cause.

Dazzled by the success that had hitherto attended their measures, the Patriarch and his colleagues now plunged headlong into proceedings which eventually proved disastrous to their cause. Excommunications

were lightly launched in civil disputes, and the souls of the royal councillors of the state were committed to the devil for daring to question the authority of the foreign priest. Conspiracies were hatched against the imperial person, and the body of a distinguished nonconformist ecclesiastic, which had been interred within the walls of the church, was exhumed by the orders of the Portuguese prelate, and thrown to the wild beasts; an action which raised the indignation of the Ethiopians to the highest pitch against a set of men, who had ever the words of religion in their mouth; but who, after persecuting the living, denied even to the dead that repose which neither Pagan nor Mahomedan ever disturbed.

The detestation of the fathers and their religion daily waxed stronger in the hearts of all. Their great patron, Ras Cella Christos, was deprived of power and property for seditious attempts, and the bold mountaineers of Begemedet at length seized their long spears to uphold the faith of their ancestors. The viceroy was driven from the province, and Malcaus, a youth of royal blood appointed defender of the ancient religion, and leader of the armed host of peasants, who flocked to his standard from all parts of the country; but especially from Lasta, the seat of the bravest warriors of the land.

To quell this insurrection, the emperor assembled in Godjam an army of twenty-five thousand men, and attacked the insurgents among their strong-holds. His troops were, however, repulsed at all points, with the loss of many officers and men, and he was reluctantly obliged to retreat to the plains. Deputies followed from the victorious camp, to supplicate him to take pity upon his subjects, and to dismiss those evil-minded strangers, who had so long oppressed Abyssinia. The royal army was in no heart or condition to renew hostilities; rumours went through the land that angels sent from heaven had proclaimed the restoration of the ancient religion, and in the general excitement the king perceived that his own authority would be fatally compromised, unless some concessions were made.

But the Patriarch was inflexible, and letters were at the same time received from Rome, instigating the emperor to combat stoutly with his rebellious subjects, and extending to Ethiopia the general absolution of the great year of Jubilee. The unhappy inhabitants laughed to scorn the offer of this indulgence, and were utterly unable to compre-

hend, by what authority the Pope held in his possession the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

Meanwhile the civil war continued with great expenditure of life, and alternate success on either side. Enticed on to the plain, the enemy were generally worsted by the royal troops; but among the recesses of their native rocks, the mountaineers had always the advantage. No sign of intended submission could be observed, and the monarch becoming suspicious of the Jesuits, who were erecting posts and strong-holds under the guise of churches and residences, lent a favourable ear to the entreaties of his subjects.

A second remonstrance was penned, wherein he forcibly set forth to the Portuguese Bishop, that the Roman religion had not been introduced into the country by the miracles or the preaching of the fathers; but by royal edict and ordinance, in opposition to the wish of the entire population, and that the prelate must devise some milder measure, for the furtherance of the true faith.

Foreseeing a heavy storm in abeyance in case of refusal, Mendez reluctantly complied with the proposal of a modified church code, under the restriction, that no public manifesto should announce the change, which must be gradually and silently introduced.

The ancient liturgy and the ancient holidays were thus restored, and the celebration of the Jewish sabbath once again permitted.

But the concession was insufficient, and came too late to pacify the turbulent mountaineers of Lasta, who had been altogether victorious during the war. They would listen to no modification of their first demand; but imperatively insisted upon the complete establishment of their ancient ecclesiastical institutions, together with the expulsion of the foreigners from the land.

The liberty and the customs of highlanders are seldom invaded with success, and a religion detested by the common people, cannot without much difficulty be introduced by the prince. Weary of so many rebellions, and murders, and excommunications, the king in his advanced age, began to view with an unfavorable eye the firebrand authors of these disturbances. Suspecting his brother and the Patriarch of suspicious views; offended by the contumacy of his subjects, and the increasing diminution of his own authority; disgusted with the present state of affairs, and apprehensive of future events; he now seriously

bethought himself of restoring the church to its original footing; but the rebellion must in the first instance be quelled, and having with this view concluded an alliance with the Galla, he marched towards Lasta.

Twenty thousand peasants, confident of victory, descending from their mountains, rushed upon the plain to meet the royal force. The two armies for a time remained in sight in that still calmness which precedes an earthquake. At length the Galla cavalry dashing at full speed on the crowded masses of the enemy, threw them into complete confusion, a fierce combat lasted until the going down of the sun, and the field of battle was left covered with eight thousand bodies of the insurgents.

Throwing themselves prostrate before the triumphant monarch on this scene of carnage, the vanquished peasants expressed their grief in the following lively terms: "Who are these men," they asked with groans, "whom you now behold bathed in blood. Are they Moslem, or Pagan, or even the enemies of the kingdom? No, they are Christians—they are all thy subjects, knit together by the most tender bands of blood, friendship and affection. Those warriors who now lie lifeless at thy feet, would under a better government have proved the bulwarks of the throne, and the terror of those very men by whose hands they have fallen. The Pagans even blush at thy cruelty, and call thee renegade for having abandoned the religion of thy fathers. Cease, O emperor, in mercy cease, to prolong a struggle, which must end in the downfall of the throne, and the ruin of all religion in the land." The empress also mingled her tears with the groans of the wounded petitioners, and adjured the king for the love of God, and in the name of future generations, to take pity upon his subjects, and desist from performing a sepulchre for himself and for his family. "What have you gained by this battle?" she exclaimed, "you have introduced into the kingdom hordes of Pagan Gallas, who detest yourself equally as your religion; but futile will be your attempt to establish in Ethiopia a form of worship which is unknown to the greater part of your people, and to the remainder is known only to be resisted to the last drop of their blood."

These representations sunk deep into the heart of the emperor, and instead of proceeding in triumph to the capital, he retired to a secluded spot to give vent to his feelings, and bewail the loss he had created.

The Galla troops were dismissed, and having collected all the principal monks and clergy, he announced his resolution of allowing the nation to return to the faith of their forefathers.

Immediately on this intelligence, the Patriarch hurried with all the Jesuit fathers to soothe the ruffled mood of the monarch ! “ I had fondly imagined,” exclaimed Mendez, “ that we were the victors, but behold we are the vanquished, and the rebels routed and put to flight, have obtained all that they desired. Call to mind how many fields thou hast won with the assistance of God and the Portuguese, and remember that thou didst embrace the true faith of thine own free will. We have been sent unto the charge by the Pope of Rome and by the king of Portugal, —beware of irritating great potentates to just indignation. They be indeed far off, but God is nigh at hand, and thy apostacy will defile thy name and that of thy nation, and leave an impenetrable stain upon the lion of the tribe of Judah which glitters in the standard of Ethiopia.”

On the conclusion of this harangue all threw themselves at his feet, entreated an immediate order to execution, rather than a confirmation from his lips of the rash resolution he had taken.

Retaining a too lively recollection of the streams of blood that had been poured out upon the plains of Lasta, the emperor quietly allowed the Jesuits to arise, and unmoved by their earnest prayers and entreaties, replied shortly,—that his adherence to the Catholic faith had already caused the slaughter of a greater portion of his subjects, and that he would have no further dealings whatever with their doctrines.

The film fell from before the eyes of the discomfited monks. The friends of the Alexandrian faith rallying round the throne, united their utmost efforts to strengthen the emperor in his resolves, and the rumour spread abroad, that on the fast of St. John the Baptist, the ancient religion was to be re-established throughout the land.

Thousands assembled in the capital on that day to assist in the ceremony, and although temporarily disappointed, the clergy proved that this act of justice could no longer be safely delayed.

Every art and stratagem was still resorted to by the Patriarch to put off the evil day, but the emperor roused at length by the harsh and uncompromising character of the Jesuit, fiercely exclaimed : “ Has then the sceptre departed from mine hand for ever ?” and the royal trumpets

suddenly sounded through the streets of Gendar, as the herald announced the following proclamation to the empire.

“ Listen and hear, we formerly recommended to you the adoption of the Roman Catholic creed, on the firm conviction, that it was the only true one ; but numbers of our subjects having sacrificed their lives for the religion of their ancestors, and we henceforth accord its free exercise unto all. Let the priests resume possession of their churches, and worship the God of their forefathers. Farewell and rejoice.”

It is not possible to describe the rapture with which this welcome edict was received. The praises of the emperor resounded from every quarter.

The rosaries and the chaplets of the Jesuits were tossed out of doors and burnt in a heap. Men and women danced for joy in the streets, and the song of liberation burst from the lips of the disen-thralled multitude.

“ The flock of Ethiopia has escaped from the hyenas of the West.
The doctrine of St. Mark is the column of our Church.
Let all rejoice, and sing Hallelujah ;
For the sun of our deliverance has lighted up the land.”

Sunscus did not long survive this victory over himself, for a slow fever carried him off during the month of September of the same year, and his son Basilides was called to the throne. His first act was the suppression of a conspiracy raised against him by the Jesuits, who were in consequence deprived of their arms and munitions of war, and exiled from Maignagna. The obstinate prelate long refused to submit to this order, until his effects having been plundered by the banditti, he also, after destroying the pictures and sacred utensils of the church, withdrew from the province for ever.

Still the fathers had not relinquished all hope of exciting disorder in Ethiopia, and finding their profit in the troubled waters. Entering into a treaty with the rebellious chieftain Johannes Akayus, upon condition of protection, they promised liberal supplies from India, both of money and Portuguese soldiers ; but the emperor being soon made acquainted with the arrangement, expelled and commanded them to repair forthwith to Massowah.

The banished foreigners lay for some time concealed among the mountains, awaiting the expected succours from Goa ; but the Patriarch

feeling insecure in his hiding place, escaped with great difficulty to the sea coast, where he was seized by the Turks, and for a season forced to work like a slave. Before taking leave of Akayus, his consent had been obtained to the sojourn of four Jesuits until assistance should arrive from the Portuguese possessions. Five years, however, elapsed without any accomplishment of their hopes, and they were finally delivered up to the Abyssinian monarch, who exiled them as traitors to the province of Lasta, where falling into the grasp of the infuriated populace, they were hung upon a tall tree to expiate their ambitious zeal.

After much persecution and insults at the hands of the Turks, and extreme suffering from the intolerable heat of the climate, the Patriarch was ransomed for the sum of four thousand dollars, and landed at Goa, where he sedulously employed himself in raising troops for the conquest of Abyssinia. Father Lobo was despatched to Europe in order to demand military assistance, which was never granted, and all the prelate's endeavours proving unsuccessful, he was at length reluctantly compelled to abandon the project in despair.

Thus terminated the labours of a mission, which for craft and cruelty has been seldom equalled in the annals of time. Whilst Rome must indeed have been prompted by no ordinary motion, to persevere so pertinaciously in a work of conversion through all the horrors of banishment and martyrdom, the unworthy means resorted to by the dauntless, but unsuccessful agents employed in the enterprize, have left an indelible stain upon the page of her history.

(Signed) D. GRAHAM, *Captain,*
Principal Assistant to the Embassy.

(True Copies.)

(Signed) J. P. WILLOUGHBY,
Secretary to the Government of Bombay.

*Proceedings of the Asiatic Society.**(Wednesday Evening, 4th August, 1843.)*

The usual Monthly Meeting was held at the Society's Rooms, on Wednesday evening at 8½ p. m. The Honorable the President in the chair.

The following new members were proposed :—

Major W. Anderson, B. H. A.—Proposed by H. Torrens, Esq., seconded by Capt. Broome, B. A.

Dr. Mouat, B. M. S.—Proposed by J. Thomason, Esq., seconded by H. Torrens, Esq.

Capt. Stephen, B. N. I.—Proposed by J. Thomason, Esq., seconded by Mr. H. Piddington.

M. Adolphe Delessert, author of "*Souvenirs d'un Voyage dans l'Inde*" was introduced to the Society, and upon the motion of Colonel Forbes, seconded by Mr. Torrens, was unanimously elected an Associate and Corresponding Member : the usual communication of the rules, &c. was ordered to be made to him.

The following list of Books presented and purchased was read :—

Books received for the Meeting of the Asiatic Society, for July, 1843.

Naturalist's Library—Ichthyology, vol. iv. British Fishes, vol. i. by R. Hamilton. Edinburgh, 1843.—Purchased.

The Oriental Christian Spectator, July 1843, vol. iv. No. 7. Bomhay.—Presented by the Editor.
London Edinburgh and Dublin Philosophical Magazine and Journal of Science, 3d Series, vol. 22.
Nos. 143-144, February and March, 1843.

The Annals and Magazine of Natural History, London, vol. 11. No. 69, March 1843.

Chapitre inconnu du Coran, par M. G. de Tassy. Paris 1842, Pamphlet.—Presented by the Translator.

Julien, Simple exposé d'un fait honorable, odieusement dénaturé dans un libelle récent de M. Pauthier, Paris, 1842, Pamphlet presented by the Author.

Journal des Savants, for November and December 1842, and Janvier 1843. Paris purchased.

Meteorological Register for Calcutta, for the month of June 1843. Surveyor General's Office.

Mineral Resources of Southern India, by Lieut. (now Capt.) Newbold, F.R.S. &c.—Presented by the Author.

Penny Cyclopaedia, vol. 1 to 24.

The Secretary called the attention of the Meeting to the absolute necessity for the purchase of books of standard merit, for reference in the various departments of the natural sciences. He stated, that while the Society's splendid and increasing collections in Zoology, Osteology, Paleontology, Geology, Mineralogy, and their various subordinate branches, were daily increasing, and likely to increase, the Curators, who were its paid and working officers in all these and other departments, were obliged to find the necessary works of reference as they best could, in their own libraries, or in those of others, and thus much valuable time was lost, and many sources of information were closed to them from the frequent impossibility of pro-

curing rare, or costly, or little known works, and from the want of those recent ones which afford the knowledge of the current and hourly changing state of science at home; and that without such works it was most unfair, as well as impossible, to expect that the duties of the Curators and the Editorship of the Society's Journal could be conducted in a manner fully creditable to the high reputation of the Society. He had therefore presented this evening the following works for the inspection of the Society, and for purchase, if these views were approved of:—

Cuvier, *Histoire Naturelle de Mammifères*. Paris, 1824, 3 vols.

Selby's *British Ornithology*, 2 vols.

And he proposed farther, that upon lists being prepared by the Curators, the purchase of such standard works as they may require be authorised.

Some members expressed a wish, that some of the literary departments of the Society's Library should also be better furnished, particularly those relative to Oriental matters. After some conversation, the purchase of the Penny Cyclopaedia was authorised. Cuvier's *Mammifères* was to remain till the decision of the Committee of Papers was known, and Selby's *British Ornithology* being considered as nearly superseded by later and better works of reference, was returned to the booksellers. It was farther agreed, that a memorandum should be circulated to the Committee of Papers on this subject.

Read the following letter from the Secretary to the Government of Bombay:—

No. 1460 of 1843.

From the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay, to H. TORRENS, ESQ., Secretary to the Calcutta Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Political Department.

SIR,—I am directed by the Hon'ble the Governor in Council, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 9th ultimo, and to inform you, that the 24 copies of the Vocabulary, by Captain Eastwick, of the Scindee Language therewith forwarded, have been received by me.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

L. R. REID,

Bombay Castle, 26th June, 1843.

Chief Secretary to Government.

No. 1625 of 1843.

From the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay, to H. PIDDINGTON, ESQ., Sub-Secretary Asiatic Society at Calcutta.

Political Department.

SIR,—I am directed by the Hon'ble the Governor in Council, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 10th of May last, and to acquaint you for the information of the Committee of the Asiatic Society, that the packets which accompanied it, have been forwarded to Major Leech and Captain Eastwick.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

L. R. REID,

Chief Secretary.

Bombay Castle, 15th July, 1843.

Read the following letter from the Secretary :—

To F. J. HALLIDAY, Esq. *Secretary to Government of Bengal, Asiatic Society's Rooms, the 21st June, 1843.*

SIR,—With reference to Mr. Secretary Bushby's Letter, No. 446, dated the 31st March, 1841, I have the honor, by direction of the Hon'ble the President and Members of the Committee of Papers of the Asiatic Society, to submit a statement of Disbursements made by the Society on account of the Museum Economic Geology from February 1841 to May 1843 both the months inclusive amounting to Rupees 1,040 : 7 : 3, of which a considerable proportion is for postage and apparatus for the laboratory; and to request that the permission of the Hon'ble the Deputy Governor of Bengal may be obtained for the Sub-Treasurer to pay the amount to my receipt.

2. I am also desired to request, that His Honor will accord the Society authority to draw from the General Treasury monthly a sum not exceeding Rupees 64, for Establishment and Contingencies for the Museum Economic Geology, as exhibited in the margin, which after the experience of two years seems indispensably necessary for the efficient discharge of the duties of the Museum.

Establishment.

1 Writer, ... Co's. Rs.	16
1 Carpenter,	8
1 Peon,	5

	29
Contingencies,	35

Co's. Rs. ... 64

3. The utmost care will be taken in conducting the outlay on such a scale of strict economy as to be kept within the Estimate for Contingencies. Should a surplus exist at the close of the year, it will be duly carried to credit on account of the ensuing twelve months, and special report made accordingly.

I have, &c.

H. TORRENS,

Vice President and Secretary Asiatic Society.

And the reply thereto, as follows :—

No. 691.

From Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to H. TORRENS, Esq., *Vice President and Secretary Asiatic Society, dated Fort William, 3d July, 1843.*

SIR,—I am directed by the Hon'ble the Deputy Governor of Bengal to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 21st ultimo, submitting a statement of Disbursements made by the Asiatic Society on account of the Museum Economic Geology, from February 1841 to May 1843, amounting to Rupees 1,040 : 7 : 3, and in reply to state, that the necessary instructions for payment of the same will be issued from the Financial Department to the Sub-Treasurer.

As regards the further request of the Society for authority to draw from the General Treasury a monthly sum of Rupees 64 for Establishment and Contingencies, for the Museum Economic Geology, I am desired to say, that a reference on the subject will be made to the Supreme Government.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

A. TURNBULL,

Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Read the following letter from Professor J. Mohl of Paris :—

H. PIDDINGTON, Esq., *Acting Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.*

SIR,—I have received your letter of the 6th of March, by which you inform me, that the Asiatic Society of Bengal has done me the honor to elect me a Member of the Society. I am very gratified for the great distinction thus conferred upon me, and beg you will have the kindness to lay before the Council of the Society, the expression of my thanks for it.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

JULIUS MOHL.

Paris, 20th of May, 1843.

And the following extract of a private letter from M. Mohl, addressed to Mr. Piddington, as Acting Secretary of the Society, in reference to the incomplete presentation of works in the Society's Library. (See Proceedings of July.)

MY DEAR SIR,—Allow me first to thank you for the part you have had the goodness to take in my election as Foreign Member of your Society; it is an honour which I appreciate very highly. I will try to answer on all the points on which you have written to our friend Troyer.

1st. The debt of the French Government to the Asiatic Society for copies of the Vedas must by this time be paid. It ought to have been done a long time ago.

2d. The books you want shall be bought and sent very shortly. I see that there is not money enough at the account of your Society, because the delay of the box containing the 4th vol. of the Mahabharat has stopt the sale of the book for a long time, and most people who have bought the 1st vol. have got impatient and sent to London for the last volume. But the books shall be bought notwithstanding.

3d. You have sent a list of books which have arrived incomplete; I will try to explain the matter as far as I can.

Agassiz, Hist. Nat. des Poissons 1er livraison. I do not think this was sent by our Society.

Cuvier Hist. des Poissons vol. i.—xvi. If a further vol. should have appeared, it shall be sent.

Quatremère Hist. des Mongols, vol. i. Is all that has appeared.

Mohl, Livre des Rois de Firdousi, vol. i. The second vol. has appeared and shall be sent.

Histoire Generale des Huns, vols. i. and ii. I am sure this was not sent by us.

Quatremère, Histoire des Sultans Mamelouks 1. et 2. Is all that has appeared, but a new vol. is coming out. It was not sent by us, but most likely by the Translating Fund in London, whose property it is.

Dubeux, Chronique de Tabari, vol. i. Is all that has appeared, the second vol. is printing; it is the Translating Fund's property.

Jacquemont, Voyage dans l'Inde, 13 livrs. There have appeared 45 livrs. till now. It was most likely sent by the French Minister of Public Instruction, and I will enquire why the rest has not yet been sent, and try to get it.

Vendidad Sadi, by Burnouf, nine numbers were sent by us; it is all that appeared, but the last number is printing, and shall be sent.

L'Espagne Artistique, 1 livr. was not sent by us.

Harivansa by Langlois, must have been sent by the Translating Fund, whose property it is.

Description de l'Egypte. I have no idea who has sent this. I asked about six years ago M. Thiers, then Minister of the Interior, to present a copy of it to your Society; it is possible he sent it through the Marine. I will try to get it completed, but am not sure to be able to do it. I know it is a most complicated business to get a copy of this work.

4th. I am afraid a large box of books sent by us must have been lost somewhere. Mr. Prinsep offered us to take charge of a number of copies of the Asiatic Society's books, to be sold in Calcutta, we sent in 1838, a few copies of each; amongst the rest, 12 copies of Mr. Troyer's Raja Tarangini, but we never heard of them again, and I do not find in your lists of books received any mention of them. Mr. Prinsep had advised me to address the books to the Governor General, as they would be then free of duty, and as the Governor General in the interval went to Upper India, it is possible the books may have followed him, and be left or lost somewhere. It is most likely quite useless to enquire now for them; but if you should believe that any of them would find buyers, I would be very happy to send another set. You will find the list on the cover of any number of our Journal.

Read, and approved, the following drafts of letters to Ministers of Foreign Courts, and to the Vice-Chancellors of Universities, to be sent with the presentations of the Society's Oriental works, as per resolution of the last Meeting, (See Proceedings of July,) and it was farther resolved, that communications should be opened with literary and scientific societies in Europe and America as occasion might offer.

To His Excellency the Minister of Public Instruction of France.

I have the honour, by direction of the President and Members of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, to forward to you two complete sets of each of the works noted in the margin, being standard works in (and upon) the Arabic, Sanscrit and Thibetan languages, published or deposited for sale with the Society.

The Society requests that you will place these books at the disposal of His Majesty the King of the French, with the expression of their respectful hope, that they may prove of sufficient interest to merit a place in the Royal Library, or in one of the Public Libraries of His Majesty's kingdom.

Should any works published, (as so many have munificently been by the French Government,) for the general benefit of science, be now in course of distribution to learned bodies, Colleges, and Societies in Europe, the Asiatic Society of Bengal would beg to inscribe its name as that of a constituted body labouring in the cause of general science, and earnestly desirous of reciprocating the presentation of works, the tendency of which is its advancement.

France, 2—Holland, 1—Prussia, 1—Austria, 1—Russia, 1—America, 1—Universities of Oxford, Cambridge Dublin, and Christiana.

To the Very Reverend the Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

REV. SIR,—I have the honour, by direction of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, to forward to you for presentation to the University over which you preside, the books noted in the margin, being standard works in (and upon) the Arabic, Sanscrit, and Thibetan languages, published by or deposited for sale with the Society.

The Society begs that should any works published for distribution to learned bodies by the University, or under its patronage, be now in course of such distribution, its name may be inscribed as desirous of reciprocating the presentation of works, the tendency of which may be the advancement of science and literature.

No. II. of Mr. Heatly's Paper on the Mineral Resources of India, and a Memoir of Mr. Keir, one of the early speculators in various Indian products, were presented for the Journal, to the Editors of which they were referred.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Batten, C. S. dated Almorah, 17th July, was read, stating that Capt. Boyes, 6th L. C. (See Proceedings of June p. 521) had unfortunately only reached Milum in his progress towards the Passes, having there lost almost all his baggage by a sudden flood.

The following letter, accompanying a note on a Fossil Antelope, from the Dadoopoor Museum, by Capt. Baker, B. E., was presented with a very beautiful drawing, shewing the close relation of the Fossil to the African Antelope types, *Acronotus Caama* (the *Hartebeeste*,) and *A. Lunata*, (the *Sassaybe*,) with its deviation from the Indian Antelopes. This curious relation excited much interest, and the paper and plate will appear in an early number of the Journal.

To the Secretary of the Asiatic Society.

DEAR SIR,—I have the pleasure to forward a paper for publication in the Journal of our Society, should you consider it suitable for that purpose. I am about sending the *elite* of my Fossils to Europe, and will, if I can find time, send you a brief notice of the most remarkable among them.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

W. E. BAKER.

Kurnaul, July 21, 1843.

Read the following letter from Captain D. Williams, first Assistant to the Commissioner, Arracan, accompanying two Gold Coins presented by him to the Society.

Ramree, Arracan, 5th July, 1843.

DEAR SIR,—I have now the pleasure to send you, for presentation to the Asiatic Society, two of the gold coins found on Chcduba Island, they are the most perfect of those found.

The Natives who found them tell me, they were dug up out of the sand on the Sea beach, about 100 yards from the Sea, scattered about.

I shall feel obliged if you will let me know what country, &c. these coins belonged to, as I can gather no information on the subject from the Mugs.

Yours truly,

D. WILLIAMS.

The coins have not yet been recognised, and we are inclined to consider them, if not Siamese or Burmese, of a very early Hindoo type, perhaps even as far back as the dynasties under which the Hindoos were a navigating and a colonising people. They are of thin sheet gold, rudely cut out, 1.4 and 1.3 inches in diameter, but weighing only 76.5 and 77 grains, and stamped on one side only. The central emblem is an elephant surrounded by monograms or symbols. We shall take an early opportunity of lithographing these curious reliques.

Read a paper "On an improved Sympiesometer," called "The Tropical Tempest Sympiesometer," by Mr. H. Piddington. The instrument was also exhibited, and the paper referred to the Journal.

Read "Memorandum on Zoological Desiderata from Arabia," by E. Blyth, Esq. the Society's Curator, intended for transmission to Aden and other parts in that neighbourhood.

Read the following letter from Major W. Anderson, B. H. A. accompanying 19 bags of specimens therein alluded to :—

To the Vice President and Secretary to the Asiatic Society.

MY DEAR TORRENS,—I have the pleasure to send you the various bags of musters. On looking them over, I fear they are not so valuable as I had hoped, but as they are, I should like a good professional report, as to quality, use, and price here, which information from their own country I have in Persian, and will prepare.

1. Roodung.
2. Pistah.
3. Zureesh.
4. Hanab.
5. Hing.
6. Buz-Gung.
7. Zeeruh Sufueed.
8. Gul Kajuree.
9. Alooe Eerance.
10. Teerungabeen.
11. Zaj.
12. Keermuz.
13. Sualob Misree.
14. Sulphur from Bagh.
15. Gum used to fix or dry paint.
16. Safflower, I suspect.
17. Teerungbaeen.
18. Tooleæ.
19. Zumah Bulooree.

Your's sincerely,

WM. ANDERSON.

Ichapoor, 26th July, 1843.

A paper on "The Mineral Resources of Southern India," by Lieut. (now Capt.) Newbold, M. N. I. was presented by the author.

Read a letter from A. A. Sevestre, Esq. giving cover to his subscription of 50 rupees, towards the Portrait of the Hon'ble Mr. Prinsep.

Report of the Curator of Museum Economic Geology, &c.

Geological and Mineralogical Department.—We have to announce here the contribution of a very handsome little suite of Geological specimens from Almorah to Mul-larie, sent by our new and zealous member, Capt. Boyes of the 6th Light Cavalry. These specimens are unfortunately small, but they are accompanied by a capital

Map of the localities, and an accurate catalogue of them, to which illness has prevented me from adding the Mineralogical designations.

Museum of Economic Geology.—I noted in my last Report that we have received a reference from Government on the subject of the Argentiferous Lead and Antimony Ore of Chota Nagpore, forwarded to Government by Colonel Ouseley ; I now present, with the correspondence, my Report to Government through our Secretary.

No. 576.

From Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to H. TORRENS, Esq., Secretary to the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, dated Fort William, 5th June, 1843.

SIR,—I am directed to forward to you, for the purpose of being submitted to your Society, the accompanying copy of a letter from the Agent to the Governor General S. W. Frontier to this Department, and certain Specimens of Argentiferous Galena alluded to in the letter. The Hon'ble the Deputy Governor of Bengal requests your Society will, in conjunction with Mr. Piddington, make such further enquiries and experiments as may be necessary, and report the result to this Department.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

A. TURNBULL,

Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 24.

From Lieut. Col. J. R. OUSELEY, Agent to the Governor General S. W. Frontier, to T. R. DAVIDSON, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Fort William, dated 22d May, 1843.

SIR,—Herewith I beg to forward specimen of Argentiferous Galena from a place N. N. West of this, named Hisato, for the inspection of the Hon'ble the Deputy Governor.

2d. From analysis here by Dr. Macrae, and the examination of it and tests applied by Mr. Piddington in Calcutta, reported in the Journal of the Asiatic Society, a very large proportion of silver is attainable. It may be considered desirable by the Government to make further inquiry, and if, as anticipated by Mr. Piddington, the results should prove so very profitable, adopt measures for working the mine, which is within the Zemindary of Ramgurh. The lead ore is abundant.

I have the honor to be, &c.

Chota Nagpore, 22d May, 1843.

(Signed) J. R. OUSELEY,

Governor General's Agent.

P.S.—Despatched this day.

1 Specimen of Ore.

1 Ditto ditto.

1 Small parcel with Matrix.

(True Copy,)

A. TURNBULL,

Under-Secretary to Government of Bengal.

H. TORRENS, Esq., *Secretary of the Asiatic Society.*

SIR,—In reply to the reference to the Museum of Economic Geology by the Hon'ble the Deputy Governor in Council, accompanying a specimen of the ore and matrix forwarded by Major Ouseley from Hisato, 12 miles N. N. W. of Chota Nagpore, under date of June, 1843, I have the honor to report as follows :—

1. My former Report (Journal, vol. xi. p. 892,) to which Major Ouseley's Letter refers stated, not that "a very large proportion of silver was attainable," but simply that the proportion of silver then found "*would in Europe be thought worth working.*"

2. The present specimen is a less favourable one, giving a mere trace of silver, and this is a just instance of the uncertainty of these small laboratory trials of ores, especially as far as relates to the value of minute parts. No two experiments agree, and where the proportion of the valuable ore is a mere fraction, the results are of course always the more uncertain.

3. The appearance of the matrix, and the presence of the antimony are, as before remarked, favourable indications; *but they are nothing more*, and indeed my report might stop here, and be comprised in this, that the present specimen is an ore of little or no value in its present situation, and with present appearances, but offering indications worth farther investigation.

4. It may however be satisfactory to Government and to Major Ouseley to have the reasons upon which this view is founded, and I therefore take leave briefly to state them here, as it is specially within the province of our institution to explain matters of this nature.

5. In all mining, and indeed in many other countries, it has been well remarked, that it is not veins and ores that are wanting, but *profitable* ones. It was the ignorance or neglect of this great and first principle in mining speculations, which sacrificed so many millions of English capital in Mexico and South America. The agents of the Mining Companies could not, or would not, suppose that a *Silver mine*, or a mine which produced Silver ores could be a losing concern, and they bought up, at enormous prices, hundreds of spots from which indeed Silver was obtainable, but not to a profit.

6. In the case before us, we have, at the most, an ore of Lead and Antimony, with the minute portion or traces of Silver which always accompany these ores, and supposing it to be obtainable in any quantity, and at the cheapest possible price, or indeed for nothing, we should still require all the expensive resources of the best European Metallurgy, and establishments with scientific superintendence to render it a marketable article here. As a mere ore, it would probably not pay its carriage to Calcutta and freight to Europe.

7. In a spot then affording only favorable indications, and where we have assumed already much that is doubtful, it is clear that the first step is to know—

I. What the vein really is?

II. What are the facilities for, and difficulties against working it, and the expence attendant on all these and on the necessary superintendence?

III. What those for transporting the products to a market are?

I. The vein may be the outcrop of a rich mine, or it may be worthless or unworkable, or break off, even for Lead and Antimony, at 10 fathoms deep. It follows that a professional and a scientific man should first be sent to the spot with all necessary means, that a shaft or gallery should be dug, and the ores from it, as far as he can reach, be examined. This is necessarily and indispensably the first step.

II. During this examination, all questions relative to the facilities and difficulties likely to attend on the working would be inquired into, and in India these are far more than Europe, as the following enumeration of a few of them will shew: 1st, healthiness or unhealthiness of the site; 2d, possibility of obtaining workmen; 3d, of subsisting them; 4th, of erecting machinery, furnaces, and the like; 5th, fuel; 6th, drawing or pumping water; 7th, general cost of bringing the ore to *bank* (i. e. to the mouth of the mine;) 8th, cost of preparing, smelting, and produce of the metal at the furnace.

III. Supposing the metal or ore to be thus obtained at a profitable rate, it has yet to be taken to a market, and this involves all the questions of road, carriages, warehousing and agency in Calcutta, and perhaps even freight, insurance, duties and sale charges in England.

From the foregoing then it will be seen, that we can recommend at the most but a careful examination of the vein as an indispensable preliminary step; but this I should respectfully beg to do, because the locality being about the lines where the granite and stratified formations meet is a favourable one; because the appearance of the ore is favourable; and because it is really a question of much interest in a district so little known, and so near to Calcutta, to determine what it may really prove to be. I may mention, finally, that the matrix of the present specimen differs greatly from the one formerly sent. There may evidently be half a dozen other valuable mineral substances at this spot or near it, though considered as mere stones by those unacquainted with them. One of the richest of the silver ores, for instance, the muriate of silver, (not unfrequently found in company with such as the one under examination,) would in all probability be thought a worthless stone.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

H. PIDDINGTON,

28th July, 1843.

Curator Museum of Economic Geology.

P. S. In illustration of the closing remark of this report, that valuable ores of Silver (as of many other minerals) may easily be passed over as worthless stones, I beg to quote from Professor Jameson's *Mineralogy*, vol. iii. p. 75.

"In some parts of Mexico, however, as we are informed by Mr. Humboldt, the operations of the miner are directed to a mixture of ochry brown Iron ore and minutely disseminated native Silver.* This ochreous mixture, which is named *Pacos* in Peru, is the object of considerable operations at the mines of Angangne in the intendency of Valladolid, as well as at Yxtapexi in the province of Oaxaca."†

I am fortunately enabled to exhibit to the Society from my own collection, about twenty specimens of silver ores of various kinds, but mostly such as shew little or no appearance of metal, and several are the true *Pacos* from Peru, the inspection of which will at once convince the most sceptical of this curious fact. Humboldt indeed adds, that a very large proportion of the silver of Mexico and South America

* Of muriate of silver also.—H. P.

† *Pacos*, according to Klaproth, contains Silver, 14 0

Brown Oxide of Iron, 71 0

Silica, sand, water, &c. 13 0

is obtained not from rich ores, but from the poor ones approaching to this remarkable mineral.

Memoranda by the Secretary and President.

I have the honor to lay before the Hon'ble the President, and the Members of the Committee of Papers, the report of the Curator of our Museum of Economic Geology upon Major Ouseley's specimen of an Ore from Chota Nagpore.

As the considerations contained in this report appear very sound and pertinent, I would submit whether the Society would not do well in addressing Government to call special attention to them.

How far such considerations might induce high authorities to propose attaching a practical master miner to the Department of Economic Geology confided to our Society, I of course cannot pretend to speculate upon; but it is evident, that unless local experiment be entered upon, the value of the ore in question as a profitable working ore can hardly be determined.

As Mr. Piddington's reflections apply equally to all newly discovered Indian mining sites, the employment of a professional miner on those of which we already know the existence, can alone lead to practical results.

H. TORRENS,

Vice President and Secretary.

29th July, 1843.

A copy of Mr. Piddington's report should, I think, be forwarded to Government in reply to the reference made to us on the subject. W. W. B.

At the close of the Meeting, the Hon'ble the President and Members were invited to view the tablet placed over the Asoka Stone, which we may state is placed on a stand beneath the pillar destined for the bust of the lamented James Prinsep. The tablet is one of pure white marble occupying a frame above, the Stone; and the inscription upon it in letters of gold is as follows:—

THIS EDICT OF ASOKA (B. C. 250)

IS HERE PLACED

BY THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL

IN HONOR OF

THE PHILOSOPHER THE ANTIQUARIAN

AND THE PHILOLOGIST

BY WHOM

ITS CHARACTERS WERE FIRST DECYPHERED

JAMES PRINSEP.

The President and Members expressed their high approbation of this arrangement, as a just tribute to the memory of their ever-to-be-lamented Secretary and Associate.

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